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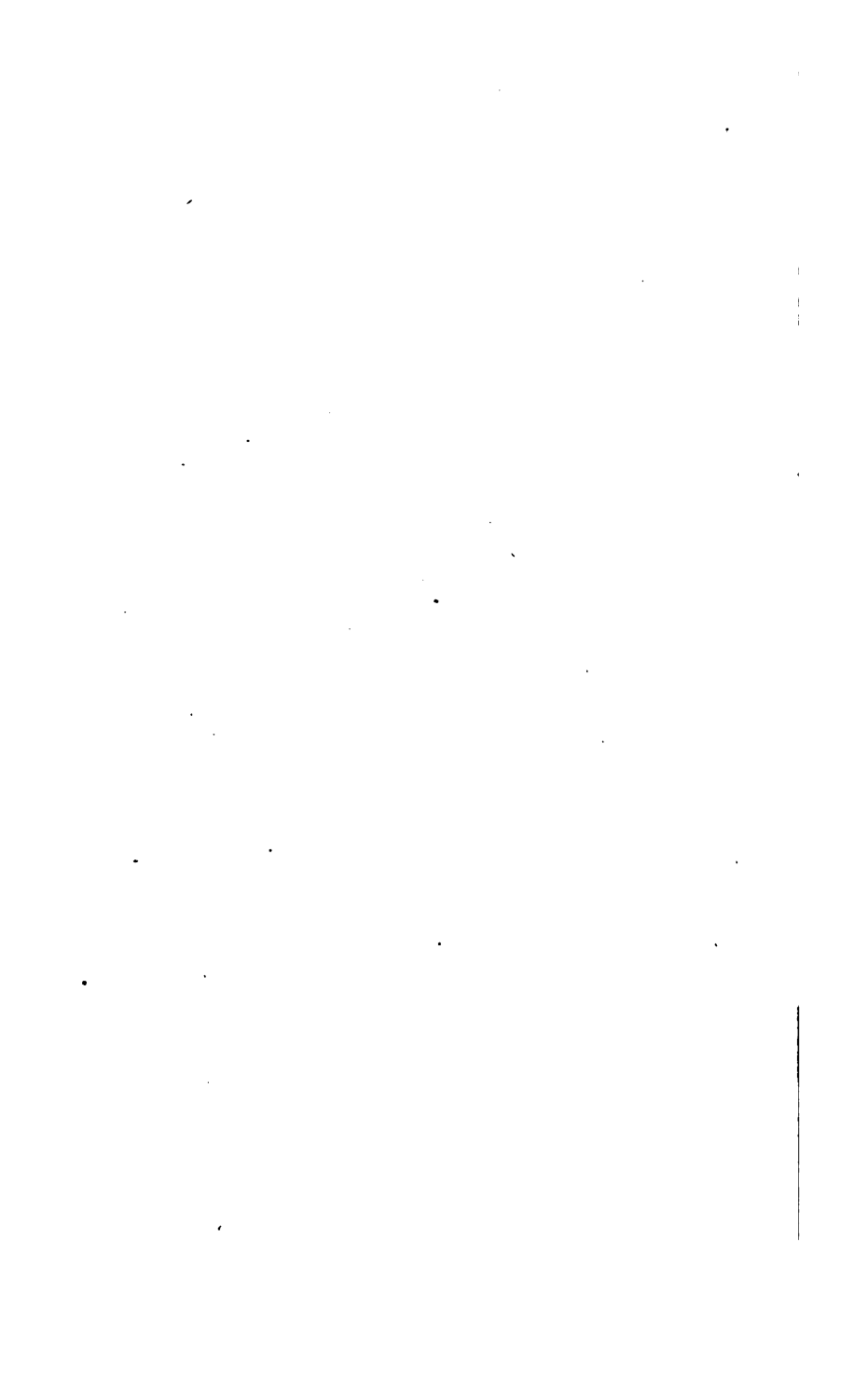
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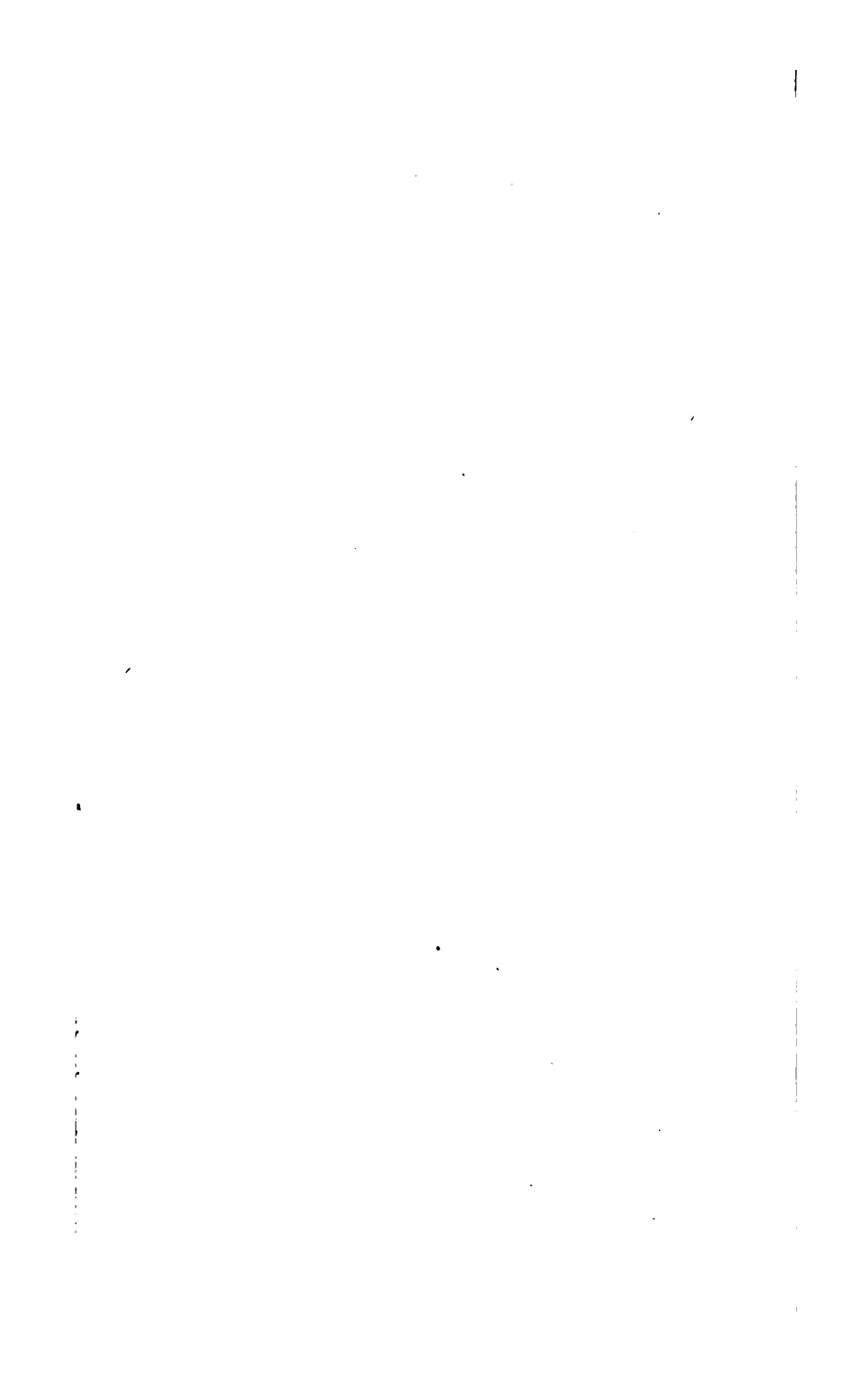
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PAROCHIAL MINISTRATIONS.

BY THE

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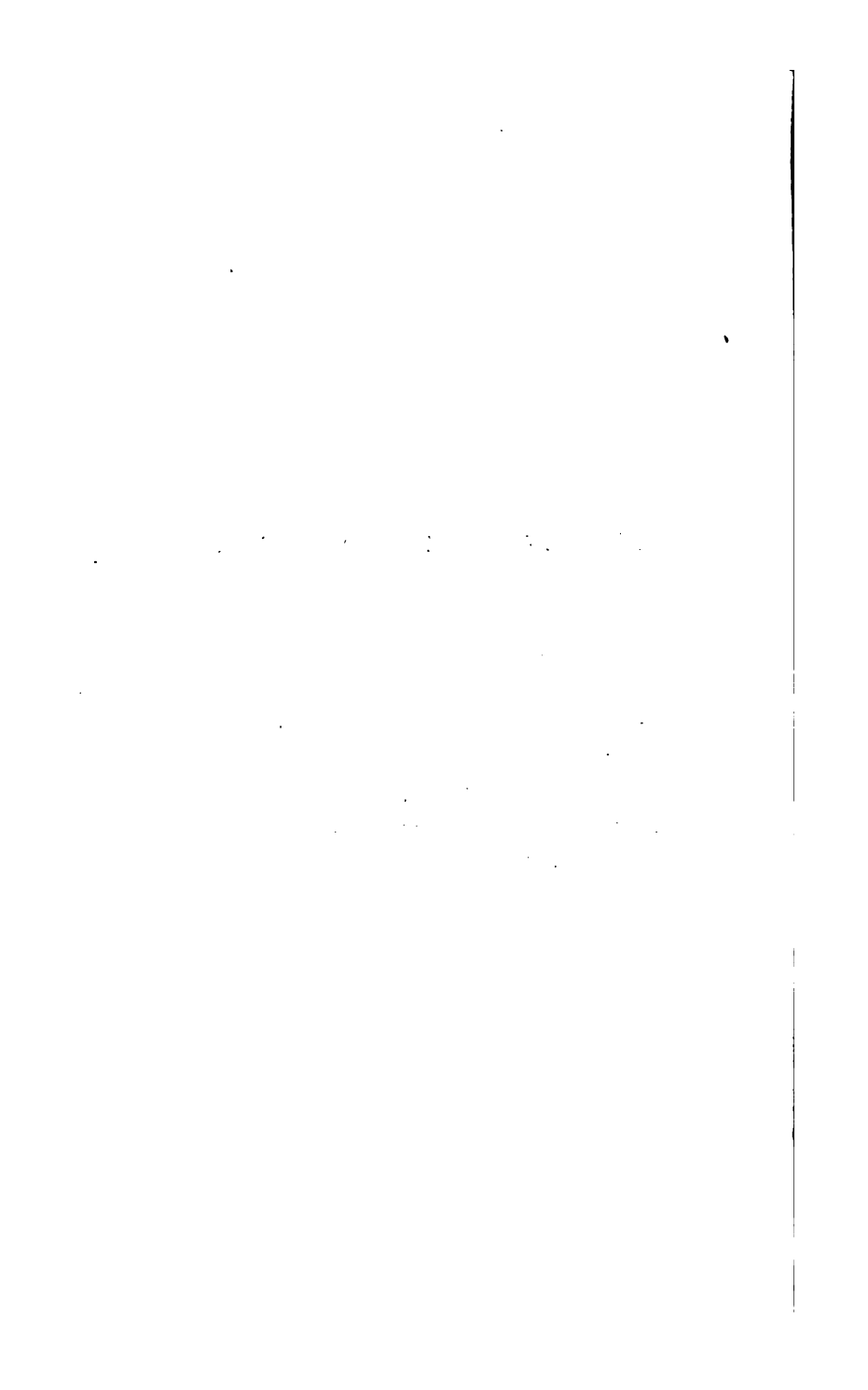


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TO THE
RIGHT HON. GEORGE LORD KENYON,

This Volume is respectfully Dedicated,

NOT WITH THE VIEW OF IDENTIFYING HIS NAME WITH
ALL ITS OPINIONS,
BUT IN TESTIMONY OF SINCERE RESPECT FOR THE CHARACTER
HE HAS MAINTAINED THROUGH LIFE
FOR
ZEAL AND ATTACHMENT TO OUR CATHOLIC AND
SCRIPTURAL CHURCH.



INTRODUCTION.

THE position of the church, as an engine for the spiritual good of its children, is such as to awaken in the breasts of its members a degree of anxiety for its temporal stability. It is impossible to consider its present situation in any way satisfactory, and its friends and members naturally look around them to see how its hands may be strengthened and its permanency secured. Without any assertion unwarranted by Him in whom we trust, we may boldly aver that we feel not this in any manner for the security of the church it-

self, which stands equally firm whether it be supported or opposed by human agency. Its present means of doing good, and furthering, in the hearts of this generation, our great Master's kingdom, is all that human interference can jeopardise. It is not whether the church shall live—a question beyond our settlement, or the control of human means—but whether it shall diffuse its blessings over our times, or whether it shall pass under a cloud for the present, to shine out with still brighter lustre on some happier age. We well know the trials it has already undergone; and from each it has arisen brighter and more perfect. Nor can the Christian who in support of his church appeals to scripture, and declares that “whatsoever is not read therein, or may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or thought requisite or necessary to salvation,”* have one moment's misgiving of the continued

* Art. 6.

and ultimate triumph of a church thus based upon the word of God. But, be it remembered, the blessings it offers may be rejected, and, historically speaking, have often been rejected, as against ourselves. It is true, the same pure light has always burned, but men preferred darkness rather than light. It has never been for one moment extinguished; but "when knowing God, men glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."* The same passage teaches us that "they changed the truth of God into a lie." Now that which is pictured to us as taking place in ancient days has been again and again the case under all the different phases of persecution, lukewarmness, and apostacy. Under which of these clouds the church is now passing, or whether under either of them, when the subject is closely examined, it would be difficult to determine; but there is that

* Rom. i. 21.

afloat in the social atmosphere which the Christian will more dread than any of these threatening evils. Poison we may avoid, or find for it its antidote ; but the injurious vapour which floats and is imbibed in the atmosphere, we have no means of contending with. Such appears that want of fixedness of purpose, that vagueness of design or of system, which, on the one hand, weakens all clerical ministrations; and, on the other, feeds and fosters the principles of dissent. We live in an age when the whole social system is unstrung, and the church unappily partakes of the general and pervading spirit of the times. It is impossible, even in theory, to idealise a more perfect liberty, whether civil or religious, than that we possess ; and the Christian will thank God for this shadow of the gospel. But the greatest of blessings has its concomitant evil ; and, in the present instance, we find this in the relaxation of all wholesome discipline, in the weakness and disarrangement of all

system, and the unrestrained liberty of every man to isolate himself and his welfare from that of his brethren, and by following what he believes his own interests, however selfish, to withdraw his strength and co-operation from the common cause.* The Christian rejoices and basks in the liberty which he feels to be pre-eminently his own, as enjoyed under the same charter in which he reads all the great privileges of his faith. History tells him that it has grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength of religious truth ; that the ablest defenders of the one have been often

* It is delightful to me to be able to make frequent reference to a late charge of the Lord Bishop of Winchester. There is feeling of satisfaction in the accordance of our views with those under whom we are called upon to labour, not unwarranted by the hope that when embraced and enforced by persons so influential, they may be carried into execution. The Bishop says, "It becomes us to be upon our guard against the approaches of an enemy who will find, I fear, his vantage-ground in our departure from the primitive ecclesiastical discipline, and in the general vagueness of principle which prevails on the subjects of church-membership and church-union."

found among the martyrs of the other : he looks abroad into history, and finds that in no one instance have they existed separately—into his Bible, and is convinced by one simple text, “ with God there is no respect of persons,” as well as by the whole tenor and spirit of christian truth, that “ where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”*

* These facts we cannot keep too constantly before the eyes of the christian world. It is astonishing how utterly ignorance has blinded the advocates of liberty to this truth. The evident tendency of Christianity, as founded on the word of God, is respect for the rights and liberties of all, and evidence of this is plainly deduced from its practical working. Any definition of liberty would lead into too wide a field of speculation; but if there is any meaning, if there is any value in the blessing it describes, it must be such as may be practically felt and enjoyed; and this being premised, he who runs may read the lesson that either history or observation will teach him. If he chooses history, let him look to the brightest periods, and see who and what it was that fanned—nay, struck out the first sparks of that liberty which has gradually crept, or is creeping, over the face of the European world. Has it not steadily accompanied the progress of religious truth? Did it not rise with the Reformation? Has it not most flourished where the scripture has been most read, and religion most thought about? To

Why, then, is it he feels any misgivings
amid his enjoyment of this blessing?

whom must we trace back our liberties? These historical questions force from us our assent to the truth, that religion and liberty are intimately and necessarily connected. If we trust to observation, is it possible to avoid the same conclusion? Compare the Heathen and Mahometan with the Christian world. Compare the Romanist and Protestant States; compare the Romanist and Protestant cantons of Switzerland; and say in which is liberty with all its accompanying blessings—prosperity, energy, and exaltation of spirit and character found.—Whatever are our ideas of liberty, be they those of a limited monarchy, or those of a pure and unmixed democracy, the spirit of scriptural truth, as standing out most boldly in the profession and practice of the Protestant, is the only safe basis of their security. It is true that this may appear to draw a line between two parties in the christian world; but as it cannot be denied that inquiry is the principle of the Protestant, as submission to the opinion of the church is that of the Romanist, it will equally tend to prove the assertion, that where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. If it is hereby pretended that the world cannot decide between their respective claims, and as it sees some opposed to the progress of liberty, it concludes that all are, and that such is the spirit which influences the general body; the answer is plain: such wilfully shut their eyes to the truth, they can have no right to identify the errors of a party with the feelings of the whole, or to impute

Simply because before him are the evils by which its excesses are accompanied; he feels them in their paralysing influence on the very principles by which liberty has been generated, and hears the children of liberty declaiming against the charter by which that blessing has been secured to them. Where need we a stronger proof that the system has worked itself out, and requires renova-

that to the scripture which those who most study it earnestly protest against, and which has in all ages produced most opposite fruits. It is impossible to separate the higher grade of personal from the lower grade of political liberty. The latter can never long exist where the former is not established; nor can a country long enjoy personal liberty where the spirit and conscience are not free. The power of the keys is decisive as to liberty of conscience; and with the liberty of conscience falls the spirit of independence. They who, forgetting the works and principles of their ancestors, would labour to do this, may be assured, that in effecting a visionary equality of persons, unequal in every view in which they can be considered as Christians, they are sapping the foundation of those liberties for which they profess so zealous an admiration. Shake off the fetters of the mind and conscience before it is attempted to shake off those of the body.

tion at that happily perennial fountain from which alone sweet waters can be drawn? The children of liberty have thrown down all the outworks by which their fortress is secured, and happy shall we be, if, revelling in the excess and abuse of this blessing, they do not undermine the fortress itself. The weakness this riot has induced we may leave to others to trace in the workings of the political world; to its consequences on the church we would confine ourselves; and although the intimate connexion between the two is so apparent and practical that it is difficult even to theorise on a separation of their interests, we must endeavour to avoid what would to many appear a political, nay perhaps a party view of the subject, and treat it as a mere question of church discipline.

The use of this phrase gives a key to our further inquiries. What is church discipline? A mere name, without force or practical meaning. Through

different dilutions it has passed, till it no longer refers to the church, but to that part of it which in the present stage of the world may be looked upon as its representative, its ministers. As spoken even of them, it must be understood in its most limited sense ; for, notwithstanding all that has been done, all the measures by which purification of the church has been attempted, to what do the reforms amount?—to a few, no doubt well-intentioned, endeavours to limit the incomes of churchmen, and a partial interference with the rights of property and patronage, but without any commensurate good. All that has been yet attempted is, to arrange and clip the resources of the church ; those resources which are on all hands admitted to be, even from necessity, better and more beneficially expended, than any other part of the property of the kingdom.

While occupied in the settlement of these mammonised views of church

reform, the attention of the Legislature has been drawn aside from the only question of real importance—the efficiency of the church, and the restoration of its wholesome discipline.* It is true, indeed, it may be urged in justification, that this discipline is not extinct but dormant, so far at least as it may be consistently applied in the present day. The enlightened churchmen of our Legislature feel, perhaps, that it is not a fit question for legislation ; they are unwilling to see the temporal power interfere, and trust to the awakening sense of the importance of the subject, and of the duties of each class of churchmen, to effect that which no act of parliament can reach.

The time is not far distant, we may hope, when such arrangements may be made as will enable the bishops and archdeacons, with the other assistants

* “ Rectify the abuse, if abuse there be—make the institution in practice what it is in theory—recall it to its legitimate uses—exact from it all the efficiency of which it is susceptible—enlarge, if you will, its sphere—amend—but do not destroy.”—*B. of Winchester's Charge.*

they can call to their aid, to carry their visitation into each parish in their diocese, no longer confining them to one parish in perhaps every thirty, and to the mere delivery of a charge, which cannot possibly, under any circumstances, be equally applicable to all. Their other official duties, their confirmations, &c., judiciously combined with their visitations, might be then brought home to the people in their own parish church, and a proper solemnity thereby given to these important rites. By these means such an energy may be infused into the ministerial labours of the inferior clergy, as will do away with further necessity for legislative interference. The laxity of discipline, (the growth of time, of changes, and of accommodations,) thus evident in the higher branches of the church, very naturally and necessarily descends to the lower; and the minister who is left to his own resources for guidance in his ministerial duties, finds no system, no directions, no discipline, to assist him,

save that only which he gleans from his own general reading, and builds for himself. The necessary result of this is a desultoriness in his labours and exertions, which carry paralysis with them, however earnest, however conscientious.

That greater feebleness has not been produced in clerical ministrations, is an answer to those who cavil at our deficiencies. Under such disadvantages as no other profession labours, by God's blessing the church ministry still challenges the good opinion of the community: the more the faults and deficiencies of the system are insisted on, the more conclusive, however strange may seem the paradox, is the argument in defence of the church. Without discipline, without system, see what are the results; what might they not be, were the church organised as other professions are, and its dignitaries required to go through the different grades by which alone a practical knowledge of their duties can be acquired? What would be the result in

other professions, were ensigns or midshipmen made generals and admirals *per saltum*, or barristers without practice made judges? And yet such is exactly the state of the church. Can it then be wondered that its efficiency is crippled, and its discipline decayed? Are the parochial system, and all the minutiae of its practical working, so simple and easy that it signifies not who is appointed to see that it is carried into execution, or that it can be safely left in its present situation to carry itself into execution? It may then be safely asserted that the present state of the church, and its efficiency, which, however inadequate, is felt in its blessings from one end of the country to the other, is the most conclusive argument in its favour with any candid inquirer. The churchman will not look to the Legislature further than in the absence of any church representation it is necessary to correct such evils as time or bad legislation have introduced, but will look to the

bishops and those in whose hands is vested the power of restoring the discipline and efficiency of church ministration. We have seen in late measures the abuses of plurality partially corrected, but the power of wholly correcting them has always resided in the Archbishop of Canterbury, by whose dispensation alone could they exist. We have seen, by the same bill, residence enforced, but every power that is now given, or at least ample power for the purpose, has always resided in the bishops, whose power, independent of their moral influence, could have always enforced residence where it was practicable, beyond which what avails legislation? Without intention of casting the slightest reflection on our ecclesiastical superiors, many of whom have so honourably and zealously endeavoured to cure the evils which, through the laxity of discipline, have gradually crept in, we adduce these only as proof of that laxity, and as reasons why the efforts of the paro-

chial clergy have been paralysed, and in the ruins of church discipline all unity of system lost. It has descended very naturally to the lower grades, until the pastor, sent among his flock with only general directions and exhortations to take charge of God's heritage, has found himself bewildered by his situation, and often sacrificed both his health and his usefulness to inadequate, however zealous, attempts to perform his duty. So long as the charge of each parochial minister included no greater number of souls than his own exertions might enable him to attend to, the situation of the church was at once healthful and satisfactory ; but when with increase of population, from whatever cause, came total inability to carry pastoral visitation into effect—that is, personal superintendence, as of one family, of the affairs and interests of those committed to the pastor's charge—the spirit of the parochial system was in numerous cases practically and necessarily lost sight of ; the grow-

ing evil crept in unwatched, and when the energies of the church were, by the crying nature of the evil, aroused, as one taken by surprise she laid hold of any straw in her emergency, and instead of one uniform system, or one systematic remedy, laid herself open to the result of experiment, and left each zealous and devoted servant to try his own nostrum, or test his own ministrations.*

Such is the state in which the church now is, and it is painful to think how dangerous is such an age of experiment for the adjustment of any great questions affecting its interests. It is to be feared, in the beneficial result of personal exertions, the spirit and principle of the establishment may be lost sight of, and a temporary good, of which we have the evidence before us, may be caught at, while the broad basis on which that good should be worked out is overlooked.

* See Wilberforce's *Parochial System*, where this subject is beautifully handled, and many valuable suggestions offered for the restoration of the system.

The fruit of this may not be reaped in our day, but, like every patched and ill-judged addition, it may ultimately encumber the edifice it was intended to restore. It may be for the present convenient and beneficial, but, with the change of times and of events, may hereafter hinder that happy adaptation of power to all times and seasons, which is insured only by the preservation of principle and system. The church is our "city, which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God." Let us then be careful that we understand the designs of this master builder, and mar not his work by our worldly plans of amelioration or improvement. That it is capable of adaptation to all the wants of its children, increase they ever so fast, no Christian can doubt, for the time must come when there will be but one fold. The cords of our tabernacle may be lengthened, and its fastenings secured; nor will he who is zealous for the prosperity of our Zion look either with fear or repre-

hension on such well-timed renovations of the spirit of our establishment as time has enervated, or corruption decayed. It is the departure from principle we dread, and the hasty adaptation of nostrums and remedies. The church is already suffering too much from this, in the perversions of private patronage, and all the local and terminal difficulties it has created, not to look with jealousy on any proposal confining its views to present emergencies. She knows not how far selfish objects may not be at the bottom of all such propositions ; and when daily witnessing the results of that deviation from the primitive parochial system, which seemed to have in it so much plausibility, she hesitates before she consents to those further deviations and allocations which this first departure from principle appears now to call for. Had the primitive system remained, and the bishop with his officers and clergy been remunerated and supported out of one common fund, divided to each according

to his labours, where were now the difficulty of meeting the wants caused by change or increase of population? The parochial system might have been then fully carried out, and each parish had its minister or ministers according to its wants. The difficulties we have now to contend with, originate in this deviation from the spirit and principle of the primitive system. It is true that for practical purposes we must consider it as it is, and endeavour to meet the evils by temporary adaptation, until some such system and discipline may be restored as will dovetail, if I may use the expression, with the spirit and principles of the church, and tend to render her, even in her minutest ministrations, efficient. Till such can be by authority established, and so long as we are left in our duties to our own resources, it cannot be irrelevant to communicate to one another such means as we have ourselves tried, and, under God's blessing, found efficient.

Under these views and impressions, the following pages are submitted to all those (happily in the present day a very numerous and influential body) who take an interest in such subjects, and earnestly is it hoped that they may lead others to communicate such plans, however simple, as have been found in practice to promote the same ends. Did not their very simplicity recommend them, the following suggestions would not have been ventured. It is not that they are new and striking, but in the belief that they are useful and practical, that they are presented to the public. We sigh for the restoration of a system of discipline, not such as shall coerce our people, but shall lead them to take an interest in the welfare of the church, and to feel that they are an integral part of it. The desolating progress of schism will have no check until the blessings of church membership can be brought practically home to them, till their hopes and

feelings can be identified with those of the indulgent mother, who, by the excess of liberty, has sown the paralysing seeds of separation in the bosoms and faith of her children.

PROVIDENT INSTITUTIONS.

I ASSUME it as an undoubted axiom, that our safest approach to the soul is through the body. "The law was the schoolmaster that led us to Christ. The flesh must be brought into subjection before we can deal with the spirit ; and in our efforts to effect this, we must by persuasion and proof convince those we wish to lead, that their interests, both temporal and spiritual, are equally at heart with us. It is under this impression that I commence the following suggestions, with proposals of temporal benefit.

When the operation of a new poor law places in some degree of jeopardy the happiness and comfort of our poorer brethren, to promote whose well-being is a chief object of our ministry, "that the poor may have the gospel preached to them," and not only preached, but its general blessings brought home to them, my endeavours will not be considered unreasonable to bring under the notice of my fellow labourers in God's heritage such means as have proved, under God's blessing, useful and efficient to these purposes. It is by no means my intention, in any observations I may make, to reflect on the late measure of the Legislature. Be it the best conceived plan of poor law administration, still no change can be effected without some hardship, and the efforts of the christian philanthropist will be most usefully directed towards endeavours to meet and remedy such cases as may occur; that, whatever may have been his previous opinions of the law as it was or as it is, he may assist in a christian

spirit in carrying that which has become the law of the land into effect. Whatever may be the faults or defects of the new system, remediable, let us hope, by the legislature,—no one who witnessed the practical working of the old law will deny its iniquity. The world is led by names, however misapplied, and by clamour for systems the working of which they ill understand, or no voice could be raised for a revival of the administration of the old poor law.

The law of Elizabeth, indeed, deserves to be written in letters of gold, whilst the administration of that law has been too often written in blood to need comment ; and yet many are notwithstanding found who, looking on the present, or on all change, with an evil eye, clamour for the restoration of a system, which, it is by all practical men admitted, has demoralised and pauperised the whole working population, and been used in the hands of a generation of taskmasters as the most grievous means of oppression. That

which bore on its front the sacred name of charity, was, in fact, prodigality to the idle, at the expense of the honest and industrious. In the hands of the paymaster it was an ingenious method of keeping back the just earnings of the labourer. Whilst, at the very time it ground the honest and industrious labourer into the earth, it served a good turn in the hands of his paymaster, when he came to settle with his lord. To his labourer he professed himself ever ready to raise his wages, but the poor-rates were so heavy—while to his landlord he used the same cry to lower his rent; it being at the same time notorious that those very poor-rates he complained of as a grievance were paying the fair wages of his labourer, and that he, by their means, was enabled to keep down the price of labour, and to levy a tax for the payment of his labourers, on all other species of independent property. This, however, was but a minor evil, great as in the eyes of

the economist it may appear, compared with its effects on the labourer himself, as seen in the degradation and demoralisation of the whole class. It was not by any fault of their own this was effected—they were driven into a system they long proudly struggled against. It is but justice to remember this, whilst it is a cruel mockery to throw their present dependent state in their teeth. How could it be otherwise? They were ground into the dust, and are now blamed for wallowing in it; every spark and feeling of independence was forced from them, and they are then reproached for their present painful situation. It is incredible to those, to whom its working is not familiar, to what extent this lamentable pauperism prevailed: as a matter of experience it may be stated that when, only two years since, in a considerable country parish, judges were called upon to award a prize to the labourer who had brought up the largest family independent of the parish, there was no such person; all had been depen-

dent on the parish : at least one third of the wages of the parish must have been paid out of the poor-rate. Admitting this state of things, the question perhaps may still arise, whether, putting out of the case whence the funds came, they gave to the peasantry comfort and plenty ? Now, supposing that independence adds no zest to comfort, such a question may be fearlessly answered in the negative.

While the grossest injustice occurred in particular cases, those, for instance, of young and unmarried men, all, bad and good, idle or industrious, were reduced to one scale ; the lowest that was considered sufficient to support a given number of persons. All motives to industry were taken away ; no exertion could earn more than that allowed by the magistrate ; the idlest could not have less, or the industrious more ; each received, not according to his labour, not according to his merit, but according to the mouths he had to feed. It constantly happened, and the experience of many will bear me out in such an

assertion, that two men of the same age, of the same power, working side by side, were receiving far different remuneration for their labour, if indeed their labour had anything to do with it; one, a married man, having his wages made up, according to his family, to such a sum as the magistrates ordered; the other, a bachelor, having only such a sum as was necessary to support him. What was the necessary consequence of such a state? That everyone was driven to marry; he had no hope of bettering his condition but by marriage. The practical effect of the late alteration is to punish him for obedience.

I have been led into these details from reflections on the transition state, if I may be allowed such a term, in which labour is now placed—a state of great trial and hardship. That good may be the ultimate result will be the fervent prayer of every Christian; but the prayer will be uttered by feigned lips, if it is not accompanied with sincere endeavours and anxious exertions to

mitigate—let us hope, the passing evil—and to carry the spirit and intentions, not the mere letter, of the law into effect.

Whether the new law has yet produced any improvement, it would be, from the circumstances, difficult to answer : the question is yet unripe for an answer. The state of the labourer is that of change ; but he who remembers the rooted evils of the old system, will not hastily expect that the mere fiat of a law will remove them. No such change, unhappily, can be made without hardship, and none certainly in so complicated a system as that of poor-law administration. Before, however, passing such a measure, whatever ultimate good it may effect, it will not be a question with the christian philanthropist, whether some protection should not have been previously secured to present vested interests — interests as valuable when vested in the person of the pauper as of the capitalist. It will appear, on examination, that, by a system of misnamed charity, the industrious labourer

was driven from his independence and station in society, and compelled to live on the smallest sum capable of supporting him and his family. He is now told, in mockery, that if he has saved nothing out of his earnings, his portion is the poorhouse. I have no wish to speak disparagingly of the poorhouse ; no one who has visited any well conducted one, will carry away with him such impressions of cruelty or hardship as the public prints would endeavour to make. But let us at the same time remember that the labourer has the same feelings as ourselves, and that whatever comforts may be prepared for us, old age ill bears transplanting ; it lives and feeds on the scenes and remembrances of former days. With the aged, also, there is one hardship the younger do not know : they can recal to mind the independence of former days, before the late injurious system came into operation, and are proportionately ill prepared for the endurance, not to say enjoy-

ment, of that well-intentioned kindness they may in their old age meet with in the disciplined comfort of the workhouse.

A consideration of the different rights in property might lead us into too wide a field ; but it is essential, in determining the real position of the labourer and his claims, that his right to support out of that on which he labours should be admitted. It is evident that all property is based on this ; its possession and security is conventional ; its tenure is the law, and the few are guaranteed in its possession by the will and the protection of the many. It is not merely that our religion says, " the labourer is worthy of his hire," and that the ox has a right to feed on the corn which he thrashes out ; but these divine bases of an equitable charity have been adopted into the laws and constitution of England, which vest in the labourer his share in the produce of his labour, nor can this now be taken from him without injustice and violence. The law vests an estate;

whether real or personal, in the proprietor, and, after every claim on it has been satisfied, gives over the residue for his enjoyment. On different shares in this estate the law gives every one labouring on it a claim, and until these are satisfied, the title to the residue does not vest in the proprietor. It is a wise and merciful institution for the benefit of all, by which anarchy is prevented, harmony and mutual dependence promoted, and an interest given to all in the prosperity of the common weal. If such then is the basis of property, it may place the provisions of the legislature in a different point of view. It certainly may be necessary in many cases to coerce one part of the community, but care should be taken that coercion be applied to that part that has offended, or that requires it. In the present instance the poor man is not the offending party; it may be easily proved he has been made a pauper, and consequently, before he is punished for being such, justice would seem to re-

quire, either that he be replaced in the position he was forced to descend from into pauperism and dependence on the rates, or that the provision he received by law in lieu of it should be considered as an interest vested in him, for which he is entitled to an equivalent.

The agricultural labourer has a right at least to protection in what became his vested interest—support out of that land his industry and labour had brought to perfection; and without a sufficient guarantee of this right in all its fulness, (as regarding old persons never amounting to an abuse,) he should never have been handed over to the mercies of a new system—this system too, in many instances, unhappily so worked out, as if its first and sole object were the reduction of rates, the amelioration of the condition of the labourer having no part whatever in the functions of the guardian, or board of which he is a part. Now if the spirit of this law be rightly understood, its object

must be the just administration of a law fraught with mercy and benevolence, the preservation of the rights of the poor, and the protection of the labourer. We can have no right to work out a system, or try an experiment, at the expense of one party only, and that, be it remembered, the weakest.

The political economist may declare against interference with the price of labour; but every law that is made necessarily does this more or less; and non-interference in this case has the practical effect of delivering over one party into the hands of the other, bound hand and foot, who may agree, and in practice always has agreed, with his neighbours in a compact as to what rate of wages he will pay, which it is a conspiracy on the part of the labourers to form a similar compact to endeavour to break. In this non-interference system, then, it is evident that on one side the law most successfully interferes, and on that side only protects the interests of the parties.

The new law, passed without remedy, and throwing the whole *onus* of the change on the weaker party, places the labourer, at least for the present, on a worse footing than he stood before. He was then able to revert to the magistrate—he can now only throw himself into the poorhouse; and if he has a family who must accompany him, if he has a home to which by long association he is endeared, or the system long adopted towards him has left him any character to support in the world, he is at his employer's mercy, who may have what labour at what remuneration he pleases.

From the darkness of this picture there is, let us hope, a brightening dawn. The system begins to work out one most important benefit. The labourer has been denied that which was in the first instance forced upon him as the price of his independence, and denied this without restoring him the privileges he sacrificed when it was first doled out to him. His remedy is a painful one,

but in more than one instance it has produced its effect, and the expenses of the labourer in the workhouse have been found more unproductive than the wages of the labourer in the field. It is painful to think through how much suffering this good must be worked out. It is painful to reflect that it falls on the unoffending party; but if it affects, as it most probably will in the first instance, those only whose demoralisation exposes them to such a corrective, and serves in their instances to open the eyes of their employers, it will, let us hope, in the end, through partial and mitigated evil, work out universal good.

On this present state of our poorer brethren and their prospects depends the course which it will be the wisdom and duty of the Christian to adopt in endeavouring to improve them. We must watch the times, and endeavour to meet their evils. When these have grown to a head, as at present, no measures can afford immediate relief; our chance must be, to take advantage of each opportunity,

as it is afforded us, to encourage those who have been long spoiled by a vicious system to exertion, and to prepare them for the restoration of a better. It is with the younger portion of the community we may hope most effectively to labour, but the elder should not be on that account neglected. Many palliatives of their situation may be devised, and it should be our endeavour so to time our exertions, as to meet the necessities of the times, whilst a unity of purpose visible amidst the variety that must characterise our labours should give to them such strength and consistency as is afforded by system and arrangement.

The field of exertion for a christian minister is so ample, that he may be pardoned in losing himself among the varied calls and occupations that bewilder him: The young and inexperienced minister is peculiarly subject to this; he is called to the charge of a parish, perhaps of some thousand souls, without his education having duly prepared him for it;

and when first surrounded with difficulties, and oppressed by a sense of his responsibility, he is called upon to build up for himself a system by which, in the character of steward of the benevolence of others, he may consistently and impartially act in all the numerous situations, and under all the varying circumstances, in which he may be placed. Nothing is so lamentably evident or felt in the church as the want of such a system of practical directions as may enable us to fulfil with the best effect the temporal and spiritual charge committed to us. What signifies it putting into the hands of an inexperienced minister Burnett's Pastoral Care, or other invaluable monitors, if he is not at the same time taught how their directions may be worked out? By such a course he is merely overwhelmed by his responsibilities, not assisted in adjusting them. They may waken and arouse a sluggish conscience, but they oppress and overwhelm a sincere one. Thus surrounded with

difficulties at his first starting in the ministry, and unable to cope with them, discouragement takes the place of zeal, and the apparent hopelessness of attending to the culture of each individual plant in the vineyard of the Lord leads to a general instead of personal administration, and is often the cause of that zeal without discretion which enhances the general and public part of the ministerial duty, at the expense of the more private, but far more effectual.

I have thus touched, as preparatory to our labours for their improvement, on the present situation of those whose temporal as well as spiritual interests are committed to our care. The difficulties which arrest our endeavours to promote these, will be the subject of the christian minister's most anxious consideration.

In a late charge of the Lord Bishop of Winchester, already referred to, the importance of arrangement and system in ministerial duties was most ably insisted

on.* This, at all times true, will be most forcibly so to any one who considers the peculiar aspect of the times; and the difficulties under which the church now labours. Her ostensible power is gone; her discipline exists only in name; she is beset, and her exertions everywhere paralysed by avowed dissent, and, what is still more dangerous, the evil spirit of practical dissent in her own bosom. I allude not to supposed differences of doctrine, or manners of exhibiting it, but to the indifference, everywhere prevalent, of church communion, the laxity of the bond which holds us together as a body, and the daily increasing and unrebuked principle, that every one has a right to do what seemeth good in his own eyes. This unconditional

* "I may add one hint in reference to a WANT OF BUSINESS-LIKE TACT in organising parochial machinery, as a hinderance to making full proof of our ministry. Our work is heavy—our hands hang down in weariness at the sight of the vastness of the field, white unto harvest, and abandoned to the sickle of a single reaper. Why not call in such subsidiary help as arrangement may give." By the Bishop of Winchester, applied to the spiritual duties, but equally applicable to the temporal.

right of private judgment, which, in its proper sense, is the charter of protestant freedom, will do more to introduce anarchy, and sap the foundations of all establishments and institutions, than the most open attacks of its enemies. These, as long as the church remains true to itself, it may despise; our own corruptions only can forfeit that blessing of the Almighty which has hitherto so signally preserved us—not, let us in humility admit, for our own merits, or for our own deservings, but for the sake of that pure system of scriptural doctrine which is the basis of our fabric.

Now, to meet the difficulties which thus in various ways oppose us, any system we adopt must be so blended and adapted as to bring to our aid all our natural allies, and to oppose to the progress of this desolating principle the ostensible advantages of union. Our first ally is the temporal good of the people committed to our charge; let them see we are earnest in promoting

this, and they will be the more ready to listen to our spiritual exhortations. The minister should be the head, and at least practical manager, of everything in itself unobjectionable, established for what may fairly be called charitable purposes. He should not merely lend his countenance, by which he is sometimes obliged to countenance what he does not in all its parts approve ; but the detail and management, or at least the active supervision of it, should be in his own hands, that with firmness he may repress what is objectionable, and promote what is good. By such a system, judiciously and temperately administered, much of that parochial discipline the church has unhappily lost, much of the influence she has forfeited, may be practically restored. The minister may hold in his hands the means of influencing for their good the larger part of his parishioners, who one way or another may be interested in the management and success of a well-adjusted system of

provident exertion. The administration of this part of the clerical duties has hitherto laboured under a lamentable want of system, a perversion of the purposes we propose to further, almost as flagrant as that of the poor law. Commencing his ministry in a parish, where, perhaps, a succession of curates has tended to relax discipline, and no system, in consequence, but one of indiscriminate almsgiving, has been followed, the evils of such a course, and the incompetency of any common resources to meet it, become painfully and immediately evident to the minister. This were a minor evil compared with its moral effect on the receivers and the minister soon finds that he is weighed and listened to, if indeed this last phrase is applicable at all, according to the resources he has at his command, and his manner of squandering them. I use this term for the want of one better adequate to express my meaning. It might probably have been called charity, but I am unwilling to prostitute so sacred

a name. There is, in such circumstances, no choice for a curate but the painful one of submitting to follow in the wake of his predecessors, or to resign all hope of ministerial usefulness. Each successive ministry leaves them as it finds them, the prey, both temporal and spiritual, of charitable anarchy. The residence of an incumbent amongst them may do much to remedy such a growing abuse, but it will only perpetuate the system, if it does not substitute some such judicious system of treatment as shall teach each to look, under God's blessing, to his own exertions as his first resource—and to his minister only as his best and most disinterested friend. The impression such a hopeless state is apt to make on the young minister's mind, should induce us to seek in some system a remedy for it.

The first object of Christianity is to elevate the soul ; the spirit must be roused, or in vain shall we appeal to it. As a first step to this, a feeling of independence, duly checked by christian humility,

should be encouraged. We must impress the labourer with a feeling that he is not to be supported, but assisted by his richer neighbours—and that according to his own exertions will be the assistance afforded him. We must avoid humbling him in his own estimation as the receiver of alms, but receive him rather on the footing of a fellow labourer with ourselves in our endeavours to improve his and his neighbour's condition.

For such a purpose, then, let us consider what instruments we have ready at hand. Our first object will be to encourage him by providence to have an interest in our common struggle to improve his condition. To effect this, there are three ways in most common use; the savings bank, the benefit society, the penny clothing club. In the savings bank we have an institution, which, whether considered morally or politically, it is difficult sufficiently to eulogise. The author of this admirable plan* has

* Sir G. Rose.

finished his course on earth ; he has sunk into the grave with the blessings of his country, and his name and memory, from the extension of his system to other lands, as well as universally over his own, bid fair to survive with honour, when those which have been more heard in the voice of public clamour shall have utterly perished : His shall survive, as not only the benefactor of the poor, but as the enlightened supporter of the social institutions of his country. The savings bank is, in principle, the safest basis on which we can erect any superstructure of parochial providence ; but in the savings bank, as applied for this purpose, in its simplicity there is wanting that local spur and application which is necessary to any great success. Our people must not only derive and feel the good, but see it brought home to their doors ; they must be enabled to realise its advantages ; if I may use an expressive phrase of the present day, they must be *humoured* in having a

direct and special interest in carrying it into effect. This is in the savings bank impossible. But another provision of that most excellent institution renders it still more inapplicable: sums under a given amount draw no interest; it is not, therefore, worth their while, until this is accumulated, to go with it into the savings bank of the neighbouring town, and in the interim the wants of the passing day have claimed it as their own.

The next system that presents itself is that of the benefit club. Now in this, on consideration and any full understanding of its real character, there will appear too much evil to be counterbalanced by any commensurate good. In the first place, the proffered advantages of these institutions are so calculated with the view of attracting members, that they cannot stand;—this a comparison of their allowances with those authorised by the scale published by government, and the instructive history of all such institutions, will sufficiently

prove. 2ndly. They are even in their proposed good very limited, when we consider that their payments solely benefit the subscriber, who may thus take care of himself at the expense of his wife and family, still left dependent on the parish. By this a wide door is opened to selfishness and other bad passions. Having paid his own subscription, and thus provided for himself in sickness and old age, he leaves his wife and family to take care of themselves. A recklessness as to further provision for them is produced, which too often shows itself wantonly in the squandering of the residue of his wages in the beer-shop. In a moral point of view, the effect of these clubs, uncontrolled as they are in their meetings, is often lamentable.

A third method adopted in common use is the penny club. Give a penny a week, and another shall be added to it. Such is the invitation of these institutions to the labourer to induce prudence and forethought. He need trouble himself

with neither of these ; it is an easy sum his intellect is required to understand ; and when he has derived the advantage your gift of 4s. 4d. added to his has procured him at the end of the year, he has only to commence a new score, and enter again on the same difficult calculation. Being able to get neither more nor less, he both gives and takes with the least possible exertion of his intellect or prudence. Thought for the morrow, except in its very limited sense, the principle and feeling you would wish to engraft on him, are out of the case.

It may be readily admitted that each of these plans has some advantages, and each does some good. Our endeavour should be to unite and retain the good, if possible, without the evil ; and while giving to any system we establish a local character, to enlist everything on our side that has any influence, be it direct or indirect, so that it be legitimate and harmless in drawing subscribers.

Having endeavoured, in the absence of

such an institution, to amalgamate these systems, and transplant the savings bank so engrafted into a smaller sphere of local exertion, I have ventured in the following rules to lay the results before others, with the hope, that in so submitting them to the opinion of those who by their professional engagements are best able to form an opinion upon them, and drawing their attention to the subject, a system may be gradually devised worthy of the establishment, and efficient for the great purposes contemplated ; such as a ministry anxious, to promote the welfare of the people committed to their charge may approve, and such as may induce a steadiness and consistency in our temporal as well as in our spiritual ministrations. This may be considered the peculiar blessing of an established church. It will not, in its creed and articles, be blown about by every wind of doctrine ; it will not, in its discipline and operations, be changed with every changing ministry. A system wisely established may be taken up and con-

tinued, notwithstanding personal changes, and the people may thus practically learn that it is not to A. or to B., but to the church, they are to look for assistance. The blessings of union will be practically developed, and the paralysing effects of schism be made evident.

In these rules the principle adopted is that of the savings bank, its ramifications only being carried more into detail, through an endeavour to engraft upon this the advantages of the benefit and penny club. The difficulties which arrest any endeavour to engraft the whole principle of these clubs lead to confining it to the more safe and simple principle of increasing, by way of interest or benefaction, the sum subscribed. This simple principle has many and evident advantages: it avoids all calculations which may be, on the one hand, dangerous and erroneous; or, on the other, not flattering enough to induce subscription. It secures the society from possibility of bankruptcy, no one being able to draw more than

stands in his own name. It avoids all the little difficulties of determining who is or who is not entitled to relief ; and, above all, it obliges every one to see not only that he is provided for, but how and why he is provided for, which is, after all, the only kind of prudence worthy of the name. The great object is, to secure, as much as possible, all the advantages of the different plans, and to make these meet the wants of the people. The society whose rules are before us was for this purpose divided into several classes, each having its separate object, to any or all of which they might subscribe. Each class has been gradually added, or subdivided. Those for clothes, for sickness, and for old age, were all the society originally commenced with, nor is there any difficulty in associating other classes, or dividing these according to circumstances. The only important principle to preserve is the payment of the same benefaction on all, and if any favour is shown, to let it be shown, not to the an-

nual and merely temporary subscriber, but to those providing permanently against sickness and old age. In submitting these rules to my clerical brethren, I am not sanguine enough to imagine that all the purposes contemplated are answered, or that many other systems far better may not be proposed, or at this moment acted on. I am only anxious to throw the fruits of my own experience as a mite into the common treasury.

The rules are accompanied by such tables, forms and comments, as may be useful to explain them, and show the manner of conducting the Society.

PROVIDENT SOCIETY.

RULES.

1. This Society is open to any one who, having been resident in the parish one year, or attending the Parochial School, shall be elected by the Officers.

—Children under ten years of age are admissible without election.

2. The direction and management of the Society shall be in a Treasurer, (the Clergyman for the time being,) Trustees appointed from the Honorary Members by the Treasurer, a Secretary appointed by the Treasurer and Trustees, and five Stewards chosen by the Members: in these Officers, or the majority present at a meeting called by the Treasurer, shall vest a power of deciding all questions not fully determined by the rules.

3. To insure, under the blessing of Almighty God, the prosperity of the Society, no person of bad character, or living in open neglect of the moral and religious duties of his station, shall be admitted or continued a subscriber; and in the Officers and Honorary Stewards¹

¹ The Honorary Steward, see Rule 5, is a Steward twice elected, who then becomes a Steward for life. By the initiative in the election of Stewards, see Rule 5, being with the Treasurer and Trustees, the respectability of the Officers is secured, and if twice selected by the Treasurer, and twice chosen by the

shall be vested a power of admonishing, suspending, fining to the amount of five shillings, or expelling any member or subscriber whose conduct offends against

members, they form a body fully adequate to bear any odium that may attend penal measures. In the body so constituted rests a power which has been exercised with the very best results. But three cases have come under their cognisance. In the first, a young woman having admitted, as a witness before a magistrate, that she was out at eleven o'clock at night, and in a beershop with loose company, she was censured and admonished, that on such another occurrence she would be expelled the Society. A copy of the censure was delivered to her and to her parents, and a copy fixed up in the place of meeting of the Society. A second case occurred in which cock-fighting had been introduced by some loose and disorderly persons into the parish ; some members who had been present were warned that such conduct was inconsistent with the rules of the Society, and would be visited accordingly if persevered in ; it was in consequence immediately discontinued. In a third case, one who had been convicted of a petty felony was expelled the Society, and her money forfeited to the funds. It will be seen from these instances that this rule is not, as in benefit clubs, a dead letter, but acted up to. The spirit of this rule reaches all kinds of offences or irregularity of conduct, and may be carried into effect by fine, admonition, repayment of money without interest, or expulsion. If due effect is given to the former, by throwing round the whole proceeding a degree of solemnity and importance, it is seldom resort will be

the rules, or brings disgrace on the Society. Expulsion shall forfeit all money standing in the name of the member or subscriber to the funds of the Society.

4. In the members only shall vest any permanent interest in the funds of the Society, no one being a member who shall not have an entire investment of 15*s.* standing in his name.²

5. One Steward shall be elected every annual meeting from a list of three members named by the Treasurer and Trustees, each subscriber having one vote,

necessary to the latter. In such cases, the Officers and Honorary Stewards should be summoned some days previous, with the purpose fully and clearly stated, and the person summoned : let their determination be delivered in writing to the offender, and fixed up in the place of meeting, and the effect will be proportionate to the care and judgment with which such a business is transacted.

² The rights of membership are confined to the White Class, (see Rules 15, 16,) as being of a permanent character ; all the rest are renewed annually. This alone is for a permanent purpose, and, as contemplating the most important objects, should have every encouragement thrown into its scale. The rules of the White Class will explain the reason why 15*s.* is the sum fixed.

and each member one vote for every investment standing in his name.³ Each Steward shall continue in office five years, and it shall be his duty to assist the Treasurer in any manner he may require, and to give information at the quarterly meetings of the conduct of any member or subscriber who may offend against the rules. Any Steward twice elected shall be an Honorary Steward for life.⁴ The

³ The election of the Steward is conducted in the following manner. At the July quarterly meeting, the names of the three members are given out at the same time with the announcement of the day of the annual meeting, (for which see Rule 10.) Three lists are put up, each headed with one of three names; underneath, in the intervening time, are written the names of those who vote for them. The majority of votes elect the Steward. The interest that is kept up by this simple system is incredible; it has always hitherto been conducted with much merriment and good humour, but with no ill effects. The duties of the Stewards are divided; each takes his quarter, and during this period is referred to on all occasions. The fifth, the newly elected one, during his first year of office, is the collector of the Honorary Members' subscriptions.

⁴ As Honorary Stewards, they are consulted on all occasions, and a practice found in this and other cases useful is to have the names of the Stewards put

Treasurer and Trustees have a power of removing any Steward from office.

6. A statement⁵ of the accounts shall be laid annually before the Members, and quarterly before the Officers⁶—the

conspicuously in the place of meeting, with an asterisk before the Honorary Stewards, thus pointing them out as twice elected.

⁵ This rule provides for a quarterly meeting, when the accounts of the quarter are examined, and any business is transacted that may occur, as the election of members, &c. These meetings have been usually held in the evening, the last Friday in the quarter. If anything more than the mere auditing accounts calls them together, all the Officers meet; if not, merely the Treasurer, Secretary, one Trustee, and one Steward, by whom the accounts are examined. From such meetings much good results; a good understanding is produced between the parties, and the most respectable and influential among the parishioners are leagued together in a good cause. Many things are then discussed in a friendly manner, which gives the Minister an insight into passing events of interest, and an admirable opportunity is afforded of enlisting on his side those most capable of influencing others.

⁶ Before the quarterly meetings, the books are divided and sent to the Trustees to be looked over, and they are then signed by those present. The annual account is merely a statement of the affairs of the Society laid on the table at the time and place of meeting.

signature of those present exonerating the Treasurer from further liability.

7. One penny a month shall be paid on each subscription, or forfeit one penny for each neglect.⁷ All fines or forfeits not paid within one month after their becoming due, may be deducted from the money already subscribed. Neglecting to subscribe three months shall forfeit the subscription to the funds of the Society; and in case an investment has been made, it shall be dealt with according to the discretion of the Officers. Subscribers to the Green Class shall be so far exempt

⁷ This fine has been found sufficient to secure regular payment, or as regular as is desirable. A larger fine would only deter subscribers. The usual practice of enforcing greater regularity is departed from throughout, on the principle that it is desirable to give as much latitude as is consistent with order, that the payment of the subscription may be made convenient; it may not always be so to subscribe a given sum at a given time, they have the option, therefore, of paying when it is, provided something is paid every month. The greater the latitude given, the more they are made to understand that any benefit derived to them from the Society is in proportion to the exertions they make.

from forfeits, and governed by their own rules,^s as these are approved of as consis-

^s These rules and regulations are as follow :

1. Each child shall pay to the schoolmistress one penny every Monday morning.

2. Merit tickets according to behaviour will be given monthly; these being paid into the Green Class of the Provident Society, will be repaid annually in clothes.

Manner of carrying these into execution.—A daily register is kept by the school-mistress in crosses for good behaviour, O's for bad. Calculate, according to what is done or required, how many good crosses each ought to have monthly, divide it, allowing them to gain about double what they pay, into so many crosses to a ticket; deduct from these the forfeits, and bring up the amount as money which is received as such in the Provident Society. The following form of ticket may be useful. This should be countersigned before it is received, by the parent.

Tickets . .	10
Forfeits . .	3
	<hr/>
	3½d.
	<hr/>
J. Sims.	

The year ends in June ; the things required are then bought, and find employment for the children, who make them up in school. The parents are consulted as to their wants, and no steps are taken towards preserving uniformity of dress. However pleasing

tent with the rules by the Officers of the Society.

8. Subscriptions of not less than one penny, or more than two shillings, will be received weekly,⁹ at such time and place as the Treasurer appoints, and be invested in the savings bank, or in such other way as the Officers deem advantageous; the interest arising therefrom, with fines, forfeits, and donations of Honorary Members, shall be reserved as a fund for the general purposes of the Society.

9.—A benefaction not exceeding three pence on every shilling, to be determined at the July quarterly meeting by the Officers, shall be paid on each subscription—

this may be to the eye, too many sacrifices of more important matters must be made to render it at the present moment judicious to insist upon it.

⁹ The time appointed for receiving is from half-past eight to nine, every Monday morning, which may of course be varied according to circumstances. The receipt by the Treasurer himself prevents questions and disputes, and affords him an opportunity of seeing the subscribers, advising with them, and hearing their applications.

in the White Class, when the subscription and benefaction together amount to 15*s.*—in the Red, Green, and Orange annually—in the Blue quarterly. Money, however, standing in the name of any one person in the Red and Blue Classes, or either of them, shall not, so far as they exceed the rate of 2*d.* weekly, receive any benefaction.¹

¹ This benefaction is paid out of the general fund mentioned in the last rule. It admits being lowered or regulated, at each annual meeting, according to the state of the funds. It will be evident that at the rate specified above, for every 100*l.* subscribed, there must be 25*l.* raised to pay the benefaction, or for every 20*l.*, 5*l.* Considering the interest payable on the gross sum in the savings bank, and the amount of forfeits and forfeitures, a sum short of 4*l.* will be sufficient for every 20*l.* subscribed. If, when it is understood that their subscription will embrace almost all the purposes for which parochial subscriptions are usually raised, there is still a deficiency, an interest may be excited by requiring a recommendation from an Honorary Member, who for every 5*s.*, 4*s.*, or 3*s.*, shall have a power of recommending one subscriber; this will necessarily limit the number of subscribers, but is the least of two evils. If the rate of 3*d.* is exceeded, or some limit is not fixed, for the benefactions, there is no hope in prosperous years of acquiring any surplus, which it is very desirable to accumulate, as well against any deficiency, as to give stability to the Insti-

10. An annual meeting shall be holden by the appointment of the Officers in July. Every member or subscriber being ten years of age, under penalty of sixpence forfeit, shall attend neatly dressed at the time and place appointed, and follow the directions then given by the Officers, after which a dinner provided as far as may be by the gratuitous presents of Honorary Members, shall be prepared by the Stewards for such members as have paid, on the Monday previous, such sum as the

tution. The reason for the different times of paying this benefaction will be understood by the rules and objects of each class. The Red and Blue Class being of the same temporary nature, the amount of interest is limited, that too much may not be drawn by one individual for mere temporary purposes. To encourage regular attendance at school, the Green Class is not excepted, and has various privileges by which the mothers of large families who keep their children at school, and see to their good behaviour, derive additional and proportionate advantages. Any sum may be subscribed in any class under the limits mentioned, Rule 8. But interest is paid only on such a sum in these annual classes as is considered sufficient for the purpose. It is limited to persons, not to families, so that large families may derive assistance proportionate to their wants.

Officers shall consider necessary towards the expenses. Subscribers also may be admitted to this dinner, on such terms and under such regulations as the Officers shall appoint.²

11. One copy of the rules shall be given to every member, and one copy fixed up in the school-room. No alteration in them shall be proposed without the approbation of the Officers or a majority of them, or made without the consent of the majority of the votes.

² The gratuitous dinner has been hitherto amply sufficient. At the last meeting nearly two hundred sat down under a tent, and sufficient was left to provide dinners for several days for eighteen old subscribers. The only payment required is for the beer and expenses; this has been regulated in the following manner:—Every man pays 10*d.*, every woman 8*d.* Under 15—boys 5*d.*, girls 4*d.* From this there is a deduction in favour of members of one halfpenny for every investment. The beer is drawn by tickets, so many being given according to age, &c. &c. The order observed is to meet and walk preceded by music to church, from thence to the tent pitched for the dinner, and the evening is spent in harmless hilarity, checked, but not interfered with, by the presence of the Officers.

of the members present at the annual meeting, being twenty-one years of age.

12. No money shall be withdrawn for any purposes but those contemplated by the rules.

13. The Red, Blue, and Orange Classes shall be re-elected annually. No one elected to one class shall without further election be admitted to another : no one between the ages of four and twenty shall be admissible to the Red or Blue Classes.³

14. In case of the death of any member or subscriber, his money shall be paid over, according to the judgment of the Officers, to such person or persons as shall to them appear entitled to it, and the Officers shall be no further responsible.

³ Unless between these ages they are attending or belonging to the school, they can derive no benefit from the Society. If in the school, or in any manner under education of a higher sort, they are members of the Green Class with distinct privileges, and are not therefore admissible to the Blue or Red.

WHITE OR PROVIDENT CLASS.

15. Subscriptions to this class provide for sickness or old age, for the settlement or advancement of the subscriber in life, or for such purposes as conduce to his permanent comfort.

16. When the subscription and benefaction together amount to 15s., they shall be registered as an investment in a book kept for that purpose, and continue to receive annually on the 1st of July, on each entire investment then standing in the books, interest at the same rate as that paid annually by the savings bank.⁴

⁴ The lowest sum on which interest is received in the savings bank is 15s.; this is therefore fixed as the amount of an investment. Much convenience attends this arrangement. According to the benefaction paid, the amount subscribed must vary; but at 3d. on the shilling, the subscription, when amounting to 12s., is entered in a book, where each member's account is kept separate, as 15s.—that is 12s. subscription, 3s. benefaction. Specimens of these accounts will be found p. 82. When thus registered, it requires only once

17. Honorary subscribers may be admitted to this class, under the same regulations and with the same privileges as ordinary subscribers, provided only that no benefaction be paid on their subscription, beyond the interest payable on investments. ⁵

a year, in July, to look them over, and add 6*d.* interest to each entire, that is, each undrawn investment. This is the interest paid by the savings bank, and therefore no drain on the resources of the Society. If such is the course preferred, it may be paid into the separate account of the member in the savings bank, the possession of the book being security for its remaining there ; the only difficulty is, that it is not so easily drawn to meet any occasions for which the member may require it, whilst at the same time the Society loses the interest on any fractional part, which taken together may be considerable. It has been found the best way to invest them in the name of the member when his investments amount to £3, £6, or £9, even sums, by which no fractional interest is lost to the Society.

⁵ This is an important class to encourage ; they draw nothing from the Society, but the interest on fractions benefits it, while they encourage a superior class to take an interest in the success of the society. The hon. subscribers are principally farmers' children, who thus have the advantages of the savings bank brought home to them, and are encouraged to avail themselves of it.

18. Any absent subscriber applying for repayment of money must have his application guaranteed by the clergyman and churchwardens of the parish in which he resides, declaring they know the applicant, the nature of his claim, and that these rules have been shown to them. Any one quitting the parish, and so desiring it, shall have his money laid out in any manner approved of by the Officers of the Society as advantageous to him.

GREEN OR SCHOOL CLASS.

19. Those only who attend or belong to the parochial school are admissible to this class. Their subscriptions will be repaid annually in clothes.

RED OR CLOTHES CLASS.

20. Subscriptions to this class will be repaid, at the option of the subscriber, in clothes, bedding, or fuel, annually. ⁶

⁶ The accounts of this class are closed in October ; each subscriber then chooses out of three or four

BLUE OR MALT CLASS.

21. Subscriptions to this class will be repaid quarterly in malt and hops.⁷

ORANGE OR MEDICAL CLASS.

22. A subscription, according to the agreement made by the Officers, shall insure medical attendance in all ordinary cases of casual sickness.⁸ Subscriptions

tradesmen in the neighbouring town, with whom an understanding has been come to, the one he wishes to deal with: a degree of satisfaction is thus secured, which any other plan might not effect. Lists are then made out in the form of letters to each tradesman, with the sum-total (interest included) placed before each name; a corresponding card is given to the subscriber; on the production of this, he has useful goods of his own choosing, to the amount specified. He is required only, on his return, to show the goods and bring back a bill.

⁷ At the end of each quarter the total is brought up, the interest added, a copy made of the amounts, and sent to the maltster, who allows them, at their convenience, to draw the malt.

⁸ The present agreement with a very able and excellent medical man is 1s. 3d. for every one under

will be received to meet the expenses of medical attendance in confinement, and it shall be the duty of the Officers to make the best agreement for attendance in such cases on subscribers;⁹ but no cases of confinement, or for one month after confinement, will be considered casual sickness.

23. The subscription is payable in advance. It may be paid in one payment, and taken out of any money

15; 2s. 6d. for every one between 15 and 40; 3s. 4d. for every one above 40. Under 15 the subscriber pays 1s., which with 3d. interest is the sum required; between 15 and 40, 2s., which with 6d. interest is the sum required; above 40, 2s. 8d., which with 8d. interest makes the 3s. 4d.; the year for this purpose commences with July.

⁹ As on these occasions many prefer having some particular medical man, and it is difficult to make any general agreement, it has been found better to let them subscribe for this purpose in the White Class. Having there subscribed 12s., this, with the benefaction, will amount to 15s. An addition to this of 5s. which together make up about the sum required, may be considered a legitimate use of the Sacrament fund; with part also of the same fund, medical attendance may be procured in sickness for the aged communicants, who may be for this purpose enrolled in this class.

uninvested in the other classes, or by weekly payments in the quarter ending July 1st. No one in arrear entitled to attendance.

24. All applications for attendance must be made through the Officers of the Society.

LOAN FUND.

25. Loans repayable by weekly payments may be advanced to members by the Treasurer and Officers. No loan, however, shall be made without security for its repayment being given in money, invested in the name of one or more members of the Society.¹ The money

¹ The rules and conditions which involve the security of the loan are as follow.—The only security taken is money standing in the name of a member, which renders the security good, as the Officers have at all times the control of it. We will suppose, for instance, that A wants to borrow £5; B one of the members, has £5 standing in his name, and guarantees the loan, or B, C, and D, having each different sums amounting in

so borrowed shall not be withdrawn until the loan be repaid.

the whole to £5, unite in guaranteeing it ; until it is repaid, their money cannot be drawn ; but to render this as little inconvenient as possible, these accounts are balanced every annual meeting, and so much in equal proportions released as has been by the borrower repaid. The money unemployed is thus rendered useful, and the fund is made to answer its many different purposes. The form of the loan is the following :—

“ Nov. 20, 1837.

“ In consideration of a loan of £6, I hereby promise to repay weekly 1s., or at the weekly rate of 1s., into the Provident Society, and not less than 4s. in any four weeks, from the 1st day of January, 1838, until the sum of £6. 7s. 6d. shall be paid. I further agree to pay 6d. forfeit for every non-compliance with these conditions.

“ JOHN WILSON.”

“ I hereby agree to answer with the money standing in my name in the Provident Society, for the repayment of the sum placed against my name, now lent under the above-mentioned conditions to John Wilson.

£.	s.	d.	
1	0	0	Mary Thomas.
2	5	0	Samuel Williams.
0	15	0	Jane Rogers.
2	0	0	William Rogers.”

The sum to be repaid is thus simply calculated. Settle

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when the repayment shall commence, and in what weekly sums ; calculate how long it will take repaying, add the interest at 6*d.* on every 15*s.*, the interest given at the savings bank, and you have the total to be repaid. Thus, as above, £6 is the loan; the interest for one year and a quarter, that is, from Nov. 20, 1837, to December 31, 1838, is 5*s.* ; by December 31, 1838, 52*s.* will be repaid ; deduct it : the interest on £3 8*s.*, the remainder, will be 2*s.* 3*d.* ; at the end of 1839, 52*s.* more having been repaid, 16*s.* only of the capital will remain, half a year's interest on which will be 6*d.* ; adding this together—

	£.	s.	d.
Loan	6	0	0
1st year and one quarter's interest	0	5	0
2nd year on remainder	0	2	3
	<hr/>		
Total	£6	7	6
	<hr/>		

Beyond the mere pecuniary assistance thus afforded, good moral results would appear to be the effects of it. The value of a good character is made evident : without this, neither the Officers would feel themselves warranted in making a loan, nor would members be found to guarantee it.

2ndly. The necessity of mutual assistance is enforced, which, at a time when the unhappy operation of the Poor Laws has deadened so much of the good feeling of our poorer brethren, is more than ever desirable and important. Two copies of these forms are signed ; one given to the principal guarantee, and the other kept by the Officers. There should be room enough left to show how much of the sums guaranteed is released by repayment.

In the following pages will be found the manner of keeping the accounts. Each class requires a separate book. The order of the rules has not been preserved, as the White Class requires three books, and it will make it clearer, perhaps, to place them together.

1837. TABLE I.—BLUE CLASS.—SEE RULE 21.

	April.				May.				June.				Br. up		Total.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Andrews, William	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 6	..	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Baker, John.....	0 6	..	0 6	..	0 6	..	..	..	1 0	..	..	0 6	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Cox, Charlotte...	0 9	..	..	0 3	..	0 6	..	..	0 6	..	0 6	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Drover, Richard..	0 3	0 3	0 3	..	0 6	..	..	..	ft. 1 } 1 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Everett, Charles..	0 3	0 3	0 3	..	..	0 9	0 3	0 3	0 6	..	0 6	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Faithful, Simon..	..	0 6	..	0 3	0 6	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Gregory, John...	..	0 6	..	0 6	..	0 6	..	0 6	0 6	..	0 6	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
Hancock, Samuel.	0 6	..	0 6	..	0 6	..	0 9	..	0 6	..	0 6	0 3	3 3	0 9	0 4	0
	2 6	1 9	1 9	1 6	2 0	2 3	1 3	2 6	3 10	1 9	2 6	2 0			1 12	0

Received, June 26th, 1836,

One pound twelve shillings for malt.

J. FRUEN, Malster.

This class being paid, according to Rule 21, quarterly, the accounts are then closed, and there is nothing to carry forward. The account itself will be easily understood. The top line is the day of the month, the bottom the sum received on any particular day, and carried forward to the daybook. The forfeit of 1*d.*, as seen in Richard Drover's account, June 5th, for not paying once in the month, (see Rule 7,) is included in the day's receipt, but not in Richard Drover's account when cast up at the end of the quarter.

TABLE II.—GREEN CLASS.—SEE RULE 19.

1887.

	April.				May.				June.				Brought up.	Transferred to Orange.	Residue.	Benefaction.	Total.
	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26				
Brought forward.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Abbott, Mary.....	5 2	0 6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0 7	..	..	..	6 8	1 0	5 8	1 5 7 1
Baker, Henry.....	3 1	0 7	..	..	0 4	..	..	..	..	0 5	..	..	..	4 5	1 0	3 5	0 10 4 3
Cox, Charlotte...	4 8	..	0 5	..	..	..	0 6	..	..	0 5	..	..	..	6 0	1 0	5 0	1 3 6 3
Dean, Mary.....	6 2	0 8	..	..	0 8	..	..	..	..	0 10	..	..	..	8 4	1 0	7 4	1 10 9 2
Fennel, Thomas..	2 1	..	..	0 2	..	0 4	..	..	..	0 7	..	..	..	3 2	1 0	2 2	0 6 2 8
Mathews, Hannah.	7 4	0 8	..	..	..	0 7	..	..	..	0 10	..	..	..	9 5	1 0	8 5	2 1 10 6
Wise, Thomas....	2 2	0 4	..	..	0 4	..	..	..	..	..	0 5	..	..	3 3	1 0	2 3	0 6 2 9
	2 9	0 5	0 2	..	2 8	..	0 6	..	..	3 8	0 5	..	..		

For repayment, see notes to Rule 19.

* 1. Before repayment 1s. is deducted for each child, and transferred to the Orange Class, by which every child attending the school is secured medical attendance.

1387. TABLE III.—RED CLASS.—SEE RULE 20.

	Brought forward		April.				1	May.			29	June.				Br. up.			
	s. d.		3	10	17	24		s. d.		8		15	22	5	12		19	26	
Annetts, Henry	3	2	0	2	..	0	6	s. d.	0	2	0	1	s. d.	0	6	s. d.	4	11	
Allen, Sarah..	1	8	..	0	8	..	..	0	8	..	0	8	..	0	8	..	4	4	
Barfit, George..	7	4	0	5	0	4	..	0	3	..	0	6	..	..	0	3	..	9	7
Cook, Jane....	3	6	..	..	..	..	..	ft. 1 } 0 4	..	..	..	0	4	..	..	0	4	4	6
Drake, Mary..	3	6	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	9
Faithful, Simon	2	1	0	2	..	0	2	..	0	2	..	0	2	..	0	2	..	3	3
Sims, Jane....	2	8	0	1	0	1	..	0	2	0	1	0	1	..	0	3	..	3	9
			1	1	1	4	0	6	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	10	

* This sum is brought from the account of the preceding quarter.

1837.

RED CLASS—CONTINUED.

	Brought forward.	July.					August.				September.					Brought up.	Transferred to Orange.	Residue.		Benefaction.		Total.		
		3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	September.							s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
											4	11	18	25										
Annetts, Henry.	4 11	..	..	..	..	..	..	ft. 2 } 0 10 }	0 1	0 1	..	0 2	0 1	6 2	2 0	4 2	1	0	5	2		
Allen, Sarah...	4 4	0 8	..	..	0 8	..	..	0 8	..	..	0 8	..	..	0 8	7 8	2 0	5	8	1	5	7	1
Barfit, George..	9 7	0 1	0 1	..	..	..	..	0 1 } ft. 5 }	0 2	..	0 1	0 1	0 1	10 8	..	10	8	2	2	12	10*	
Cook, Jane.....	4 6	..	..	..	0 4	..	0 2	..	..	..	0 4	..	0 2	..	5 6	..	5	6	1	4	6	10
Drake, Mary...	6 9	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	10 0	2 8	7	4	1	10	9	2	2		
Faithful, Simon.	3 3	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	4 3	..	4	3	..	4	3†			
Sims, Jane.....	3 9	0 1	..	0 2	0 1	0 1	0 1	..	0 2	0 1	..	..	0 3	0 1	4 10	..	4	10	1	2	6	0
		1 1	0 6	0 5	1 6	0 4	0 8	1 5	1 9	0 5	1 7	0 4	1 1	1 2										

* See Rule 6.—No benefaction is paid on any sum exceeding the rate of 2d. weekly; this amounting to 8s. 8d., the interest will be 2s. 2d. at 3d. in the shilling, which, whatever may be the sum subscribed, will be the highest interest in this class, it being merely for a temporary purpose.

† On this sum no benefaction is paid, as the whole allowed sum has been received in the Blue Class. See Blue Class, and Rule 9.—For the manner in which this class is repaid, see Blue 20, and note.

ORANGE—CONTINUED.

TRANSFERRED.			PAID.		
	s.	d.		s.	d.
White.					
Andrews, Jane	2	0	Green.		
White.			Smith, Sarah	1	0
Annetts, Robert	1	0	Red.		
Red.			Sims, Jane	2	8
Baker, William	2	8	Green.		
Green.			Stephens, Samuel	1	0
Bantam, George	1	0	White.		
White.			Simpson, George	2	8
Fetters, John	2	0	Green.		
Red.			Thomas, George	1	0
Roberts, Mary	2	0	Red.		
			Webb, John	2	0
			Andrews, George	1	0
			Andrews, William	2	8
			Bingley, John	2	0
			Bingley, William	2	0
			Cotton, Ralph	2	8
			Cotton, Mary	2	8
			Devon, John		
			Devon, Thomas		
			Faithful, George		
			Fennel, Mary		
			Sims, William		
			Thompson, Jane		

This table shows the manner in which this account may be kept. To the first names the interest is added as exemplifying the manner of doing it; but this in practice need not be done, as it is easier, when all is paid in, to calculate the interest on the whole sum. As the total required is paid, the sum is filled up. Those who transfer from other classes have the sum required deducted from the sum brought up at the end of the quarter. See White Class.

TABLE V.—WHITE.

	April.						May.						June.						Brought up.	Invested.	Transferred to Orange.	Carried forward.
	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	1				
Brought forward.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Andrews, Jane....	3 3	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	4 4	..	..	..	..	4 4	..	2 0	2 4
Annetta, Robert...	6 8	..	0 4	..	0 4	..	0 4	..	0 4	..	0 4	..	0 6	8 10	..	..	..	..	8 10	..	1 0	7 10
Baker, Robert....	7 2	..	0 4	..	..	..	..	1 0	..	0 6	..	..	1 0	11 0	..	..	..	..	11 0	..	..	11 0
Fetters, John....	3 1	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	0 2	..	4 3	..	..	..	..	4 3	..	2 0	2 3
Roberts, William.	4 0	2 0	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	10 0	..	..	..	..	10 0	..	..	10 0
Simpson, George..	8 0	..	0 1	..	2 0	..	..	1 0	..	..	..	..	2 0	13 1	12 0	1 0	..	..	13 1	12 0	1 0	0 1
Thomas John.....	10 0	0 6	..	0 3	..	0 1	..	0 2	0 1	..	0 4	0 1	0 2	11 8	..	..	..	..	11 8	..	..	11 8
	2 9	0 10	0 6	0 5	5 4	0 5	0 5	1 6	2 3	3 4	0 4	0 3	3 9									

* When, according to Rule 16, the money subscribed amounts to 12s., it is transferred to a book kept like that in Table 8; the residue over and above 12s. is carried on.

WHITE--CONTINUED.

[illegible]

TABLE VI.—LOAN FUND.—SEE RULE 25.

	To be repaid.			April.			May.			June.			Carried for- to be repaid.						
	£.	s.	d.	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	£.	s.	d.
Jones, George	4	3	0	1	0	..	2	0	..	2	0	..	1	0	..	3	10	0	0
Johnston, Mary	1	2	0	2	0	..	2	0	..	2	0	..	3	0	..	2	0	9	0
Loyd, Samuel	0	13	0	1	0	..	1	0	..	1	0	..	1	0	..	1	0	6	0
Williams, John	0	16	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	..	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	0
Weston, George	0	7	0	0	6	0	6	0	6	0	6	0	0	6	0	6	1	0	..
				5	6	1	6	6	6	1	6	2	6	2	6	3	6	6	0

Deducting the sum received from the sum to be carried forward shows when the whole sum is repaid.

TABLE VII.—DAY-BOOK.

	In hand	.	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
June 5.	Weekly receipt	.	20	0	0				
12.	Ditto	.	0	16	10	Advanced J. Smith, on loan	5	0	0
19.	Ditto	.	0	5	7	W. Williams (sickness)	0	5	0
26.	Ditto	.	0	7	9	J. Asshen on his marriage, to pay for furniture .	2	3	0
	Mr. Smith (annual subscription)	.	0	11	7	W. Webb, towards apprenticeship	3	0	0
			0	10	0	Blue Class (for malt) .	1	12	0
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			22	11	9		12	0	0
						Into savings bank . .	9	0	0
							<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
						In hand, carried forward.	21	0	0
							1	11	9

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Examined and passed, July 1st, 1837

JOHN WEBB,
JANE SHADWELL,
SOPHIA FAITHFUL,

Officers.

TABLE VIII.

Drawn out.

GEORGE SIMPSON.

Paid in.

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1837.		
Jan. 1. Investment . . .	15	0
May 29. Investment . . .	15	0
July 1. Interest on two investments . . .	1	0

Drawn out.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

Paid in.

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1836.		
June 20. Investment . . .	15	0
July 1. Interest on one investment . . .	0	6
Jan. 16. Investment . . .	15	0
July 3. Investment . . .	15	0

s. d.
5 0

Drawn out in sickness .

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Each quarter, as the accounts are brought forward, the investments are entered here as 15*s.* each; that is, 12*s.* subscription and 3*s.* benefaction, or as the case may be, according to the benefaction determined on. If less than 3*s.*, the subscription of course must rise in proportion to make the whole amount 15*s.*, the sum on which interest is calculated and paid in the savings bank.

The perusal of the preceding remarks, with the annexed Rules and Tables, may, perhaps, on the one hand impress the reader with a feeling of trifling simplicity, and on the other with inadequate results from what, in the multitude of figures, may threaten to occupy much time, and to claim great attention. I would venture to remind my clerical brethren, that if it is simple it is safe ; and while it accomplishes the good purposes, both pecuniary and moral, they contemplate, it does away with the responsibility any deeper system of calculation must impose on them. The simplest calculation made once a year *must* declare the Society's solvency. Supposing its surplus fund so low as to be unable to go on, close the books, and every one has his own, with all that was either promised or held out to him ; you have not, perhaps, done as much good as you could under more favourable circumstances have wished, but at all events you have done much. A large sum remains saved and invested, and you have

given to many that provident and moral impetus which is the first and most difficult step in the scale of self-exertion.

Admitting to its fullest extent that there is nothing new in its principle which has been before disclaimed, and that it does not professedly propose to work out good by any hitherto new and unbeaten track,—that there is no depth of difficult or scientific calculation—it claims for its only merit, if merit it may be allowed, that by simple and easily intelligible and practicable principles, it does that more securely and with more beneficial results, both provident and moral, which the christian philanthropist desires, than does any more laboured but more uncertain system founded on a calculation of chances. Be it admitted most freely that the proposed benefits of other systems are greater and more tempting, there are few or none of them that this does not embrace. For instance, it fixes no settled provision in sickness, but it enables and encourages each to

raise such a fund as he may draw from, not only in sickness, but for all the general purposes of advancement in life. It settles no annuity, but it is in the option of the subscriber so to apply his investments ; and under the late regulations of government it is so easy to effect this, and in government securities, that although not mentioned in the Rules, there is no easier way than this of purchasing an annuity by instalments, the money being in all cases returned to the family of the subscriber, if he should not live till the time fixed for the commencement of his annuity. If, on the other hand, the results are considered inadequate to the trouble, the error will be found to exist in the formidable array of figures necessary to show the working out of the plan. With a book ruled after either of the models given in these Tables, it is only to enter in the first line not filled up, and against the name of the subscriber, the sum paid, and to bring the whole forward in the day-book,—a process of but little

trouble or exertion. The books once ready, any one may keep them.

Of the inadequacy of the results no one can judge without a trial. To this I would willingly lead them. However homely may appear the regulations, in that homeliness are their strength and efficacy. It is earnestly hoped they are not above, but suited to those for whose understanding they were intended ; for unless their ideas and feelings can be identified with our attempts to improve their condition, we are but working single-handed and in the dark ; we must have them with us, or our philanthropical struggles will be vain.

PAROCHIAL VISITATION.

IN the preceding remarks, disunion has been pointed out as the moral evil of the day. It is this that paralyses the effect and interest of clerical exertion, precludes the pastor from identifying himself with his flock, and his flock from that feeling of union and membership which should bind them together as one body, of which he is the head. It should be our labour to restore in its full vigour this feeling, and much may be done by the minister towards it. His first step will be an endeavour to become personally acquainted with his flock. Although fully sensible of this duty, and of the meaning of our title, pastor, the difficulty of adequately performing its duties has led to that vagueness of exertion amongst

us, which has produced such unhappy results. It might be easy to trace this to many partial causes, and, perhaps, amongst the first to the chapel system, which, combined with the want of a power which should somewhere exist of carrying out and adopting the parochial system, as the progress of population required, has had on church discipline generally a most unhappy influence. The wisdom of the parochial system, which grouped round every parish church its body of worshippers, and placed them under a particular ministry, is made painfully evident in the consequences of its neglect. Had the power of adjustment existed which the progress of society required, this beautiful principle might have been still carried out, and all its benefits preserved; but, alas! the jealousy of those who presided over the reformation of our church interfered, and in checking further innovation, which had perhaps become necessary, checked also the extension of the

principle by which a vitality had been given to the ministrations of the parochial clergy. A stop being thus put to all further improvement, and even to all necessary adaptation, the living principle on which the whole system was built, became, as it were, stagnant ; worldly interests interfered and clashed ; the labours of a christian ministry were bought and sold in the market ; and the rights of property became paramount to the rights of religion. Under such circumstances, the exigencies of the times found a remedy in the erection of chapels in which the rich at least might find the accommodation the parish church denied. But with the chapel there was no pastoral administration connected. It was gravely argued, that it was not to be expected the erection of these chapels should be allowed to interfere with the rights of property vested in the patrons, and the church and pastoral surveillance of a christian people were neglected ; that a right founded on the usurpation of a

trust might not be interfered with. If a striking instance of the preference of the interest of the few to that of the many were required, it would be difficult to find any one more striking. The baneful effects of this are more general than we may readily believe.

Let us hope that those in whose hands is placed the adjustment of ecclesiastical affairs, will direct their attention to it, and turn the chapels, so long the cause of disunion and feebleness in church ministrations, into parochial churches, the centres of parochial districts.

These, however, are evils higher authorities must remedy. It is our province to consider things as they are, and endeavour so to apply our means and direct our exertions, that, with things as they are, we may effect the greatest good. The very spirit of the parochial system is, that the ministrations of the pastor should be personal. The flock committed to his charge should be personally known to him. The character of each

individual should be his study, without which he will neither be able to avail himself of occurring circumstances, or to direct his public ministry to the greatest profit. Now, in the largest population, this pastoral surveillance is to a certain extent attainable; in the small, it is a matter of easy acquirement. In the largest parish, with the aid of a visiting society properly organised, a complete but not officious surveillance may be effected, and, by sections judiciously arranged, the most perfect order may be established, while the ministrations of the clergy, called in only when circumstances may require it, may be rendered far more efficient than it were otherwise possible in a large population. To render this system efficient, and to preserve a unity of purpose, each visiter should be prepared with a register of the name, age, &c. &c., of those living in his district; and a corresponding list of all should be kept by the clergyman, to whom, at appointed meetings, all changes or re-

marks may be made known, and by whom the attention of each visiter may be usefully directed to the particular and pressing subjects of the day. Thus may he know generally whether education is attended to or neglected, and particularly who are neglecting the education of their children, the name, and the number, and the condition of the communicants, of those who attend church, and of those who use family prayer, and according to the wants of his parish may he give vigour and energy to his public exhortations; while by means of the visitors he may back up his exhortations by private remonstrance. In a parish of small or moderate population, no difficulty will exist in carrying this out to the greatest perfection. The clergyman's own register may include every one, their circumstances; their state both spiritual and temporal; and when once such a register is formed, his personal surveillance and ministration will be materially facilitated. It may perhaps be imagined that in a parish

where the pastor's visits are frequent, and his people well known to him, such an addition to his labour is unnecessary. But this will not render it the less indispensable ; the memory cannot embrace the minutiae and particulars of each case, while, so far from being an addition to his labours, it will be found most materially to lessen them. His register will direct his visits to those who most require his ministrations, and give regularity and method to his pastoral exertions. He will find in it a counsellor and monitor he can at any moment consult. It will remember for him (if I may be allowed the phrase) the state and disposition of his flock, and enable him by forethought to direct his labours with the greatest advantage and hopes of success. Books have been ingeniously drawn up and published with these views, but a very simple one may be made to answer the purposes required ; and as constant changes will require as constant erasures, the succession of these changes will require fre-

quent renovation of the register. All to be considered is, that it be clear and efficient for its purpose. To render it this, the parish will be divided out into households or families, with such an alphabetical arrangement or reference as will make it easy of consultation. The entries will of course vary in every place, according to circumstances; but some general points, such as the age of the younger part of the community, in the accuracy of which the parish register will assist, and whether they read and write, or go to school: again, in the older, whether they attend church, the sacrament, have Bibles and Prayer-books, or use family devotion, will be common to all, and all these may be designated, for brevity and convenience sake, by their initial letters. Any further information, to whatever extent, will be found useful; and a knowledge of their temporal state, whether they are members of any provident society or benefit club, will enable the pastor the better to administer relief in case of

distress, and to determine on the wisest course in each case to adopt towards them. These minutiae may perhaps appear of secondary importance, but they will not be so esteemed by any one who has experienced the advantages and assistance of such a register. An unity and consistency of purpose is thereby given to our ministerial labours, which no desultory exertions will attain; the basis of a perfect system of pastoral visitation is laid down for us, and may by these means be carried out with the best effect.

The simplest form of such a register, requiring merely a blank or ruled book, I shall venture to annex. An excellent and very simple form for this purpose is that published under the name of the *Speculum Gregis*. The initial letters will soon be familiar, and will be easily understood. B., Bible; P., Prayer-book; R., Reads; W., Writes; Ben. Cb., Benefit Club; Ch., Church; Prov. Soc., Provident Society; W & SSc.

Weekly and Sunday School ; Diss., Dissenter ; Fam. P., Family Prayer.

1 Adams, John } B—P—R—W—Ben. Cb.
 Mary } R.—Ch—Sac.—Prov. Soc.
 William 1826. W—& SSc.—Prov. Soc.
 Mary 1828. W—& SSc.—Prov. Soc.
 John 1830. W Sc.

2 James, George R—W—B—P—Diss.

43 Roberts, Thomas } B—P—R—W—Ch. Sac.—
 Jane } Fam. Pr.—Prov. Soc.
 George, 1812. B—P—R—W.—Ch. Ben.
 Cb.
 Jane, 1818. {B—P—R—Ch. Sac.—Prov.
 Soc.
 Thomas 1825. SSch.
 Williams, John Lodger. B—P—R—Ch.

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Having thus prepared the means for looking into the parish, the most important point in parochial administration immediately connected with it will be the establishment of a good system of pastoral visitation. This duty is too generally admitted and practised to need one word to enforce it ; the only question is,

how to carry it into execution. The exhortations of the pulpit will have little weight where this branch of duty is not systematically executed. It is in the personal application of the truths thus taught, that their effect will be seen.

The general term pastoral visitation will include as well attendance on the sick, as friendly intercourse and admonition with those in health. On the first it is very difficult, perhaps presumptuous, to venture advice. There is no clergyman zealous in the performance of his duty, who, after the most anxious thought and reflection, has not on this subject trembled at his responsibility. It is not that he has no assistance, that he has no rules or precedents or directions to guide him, but that he finds in practice he cannot avail himself of the assistance, he cannot apply to the individual cases he meets with, the rules and precedents. Had he a simple and stated case to deal with, the many excellent publications existing might guide him efficiently into the chamber of

the sick man ; but there is no case that has not its peculiar symptoms, there is no specific prescription that will in all its particulars apply. When, therefore, in a case of urgency, he first discovers the symptoms of the spiritual patient, it is too late to turn over and apply the exhortations prepared for his case ; nor, perhaps, will the time or circumstances admit that detailed course of spiritual exercise which is so easily drawn up in the study, but vainly carried into the chamber of sickness or death. Without in any manner undervaluing the labours of such men as Paley, Wilson, Stonehouse, and Slade, or the many others who have taken up and treated on this subject, and as a subject most successfully, they will not, singly or together, form that ready manual and monitor the christian minister requires. So far from undervaluing them, they are the textbooks of this part of the clerical duty, and as such should be in every clergyman's library. Each of those above men-

tioned, and many others, may be studied with the best effect, but they will be found; neither together nor singly, to form such a system as the christian minister requires. He has no resource, with God's grace, but in himself; nor is there any part of our clerical duty that requires so much study, so much preparation, as this. In the sick room he must be prepared to meet every species of doubt, to answer every difficult question, to unveil and rebuke every shade and colour of sin, and to apply to each particular case its remedy. Every faculty will be here called into request: he must in one sense be all things to all men. He must be kind and affectionate in his manner, making the ease and welfare of the body his key to the soul; he must be uncompromising in his rebuke, rebuking not the sinner so much as the sin—in this imitating the example of his Lord. He will have to distinguish nicely between the deceitful shades of sin and the excuses by which transgression is palliated,—judging this,

perhaps, as much and often more, from the character than from the professions of the patient. Lastly, he must divide and apply; promptly and aptly, the word of God; the pharmacy from whence all his medicines must be derived. To attain this will be readily admitted to be no easy task, and yet how small is the preparation that is in practice considered necessary for it! In the ancient church, and in the theory of ours, it appears provided for in the office of deacon; but how painfully is this lost sight of in the present practice, which often places a parish under the care of a young minister wholly inexperienced, whose desultory though zealous exertions rather lead to confusion than to that high estimation his systematic and disciplined labours should acquire for the church he represents. The conscientious minister, impressed with his responsibility, will seriously consider this, while a sense of the inefficiency of his ministration, with which he will always come out of the sick room, will direct his earliest atten-

tion to such a system of sick visitation as will place him at least in an advantageous situation in his dealings and controversies with his patients. For such purposes, the spirit of the church, evinced in its model service, will be his safest guide. The Bible will be his armoury, from whence all his weapons will be selected; the labour of the selection and adaptation, under God's blessing, must be his own. He must store up and arrange in his mind its exhortations and rebukes, that he may be ready at any moment to wield them. He will be wise, perhaps, for his readier use, and to fix them in his memory, to arrange them as in his general reading they may occur; by so doing he will refer to them readily and easily, and in their appropriate and seasonable application will be their force. It is true, he will find this partly done for him in Slade's excellent prayers for the sick; but without making these his own by constant study, he will not be able to trust to them. However power-

ful, they must be his own weapons, or he will not know how to wield them; like David, his own sling and stone will be more effectual in his hands, when tried in faith, and under a confidence of God's blessing, than the best tempered armour he can don. In trusting, however, to his own resources, he must anxiously guard against vagueness, and endeavour, on the contrary, to preserve an unity of purpose, of exhortation, and of prayer, which is the lesson an established church teaches us in all its offices. It will be difficult to avoid this without system; the system, then, must be his own, that is, his own grafted on and consistent with that of the church; his general outline may be adopted from any of the excellent works published for this purpose, but the filling up must be his. The whole work will be looked upon, by any one thus considering it, as one requiring the greatest preparation; to each must he speak in his own tongue, observing and calculating on every shade.

of character, until his scriptural extracts, his application, and his prayers, all speak and enforce the same doctrine or the same truth.

The second part of pastoral visitation, and one of no less consequence than the foregoing, embraces those in health. There is no need of remarks on this, because its execution is but the pleasing occupation of our unoccupied time. That it is desirable to keep up a correspondence and good understanding with all our flock, will not be for one moment doubted; its practicability, or at least partial practicability, has been pointed out in the preceding remarks. It is by such surveillance a wholesome but not offensive check will be established, and an interest evinced in our people's personal welfare, which cannot fail to be conducive to the furtherance of spiritual objects, and of those influences which predispose the mind for the reception of truth. The occasions and opportunities of carrying such a system into execution,

will be so various, that no difficulty will present itself. The illness of members of the family, of children, or their absence from school, will afford daily motives and reasons to lift the latch of the cottage door; and it may be boldly asserted, on experience, that the visiter will be always welcome. He will do well to invest himself, not merely with the character of a spiritual adviser, but of a friend; and the more he can enter into the details of family matters, and sympathise with them in the prosperity or adversity of their children, the more successfully will he ingratiate himself, and have his advice and exhortation attended to. This is a fertile source of influence, and we can afford to lose none. The soul can be reached only through the body, and by a kindly feeling only and interest displayed towards them, in all their temporal concerns, can we hope to establish or preserve that influence so important to their spiritual good. It is in the course of friendly conversation that we can best

introduce such subjects as we wish to press on their particular attention, as important for their personal consideration. The harsh rebuke, or formal exhortation, will seldom have such influence or weight as the softened remonstrance of friendly converse.

“ Fear but freezes friends ; but love like heat
 Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.
 To threats the stubborn sinner oft is hard,
 Wrapt in his crimes against the storm prepared ;
 But if the milder beams of mercy play,
 He melts and throws his cumbrous cloak away.”

DRYDEN.

There is one other class in parochial visitation, who come between the sick and those in health, the aged and infirm, who require constant attendance, and draw much on the time of the parochial minister. There are two means by which this duty may be provided for, and the onus partially removed. First, by a cottage service, or services, at such times and places as may suit the convenience and infirmities of those for whom they

are arranged. The object of more particular visits may thus be answered, and their attention directed to such subjects as it may be desirable to place before them. Secondly, by a parochial lending library, which at once gives them an opportunity of profitably employing their time, and the minister of directing their thoughts to religious subjects.

There will still be many left whom it will be impossible to embrace adequately in these arrangements, who must be provided for in the more ordinary way; the only object proposed being so far to economise time, and husband exertion, as may be consistent with the efficient execution of the duty. By such arrangements for the old and infirm by the Provident Society, which once in the week brings all its subscribers to the minister, and by a judicious system of pastoral visitation, may such a parochial surveillance be established, the rays of which meet in the pastor, as may unite a

parish almost as one body, and prevent that unhappy tendency to separation that is sapping the foundation, while it paralyses the energies, of the noblest fabric ever erected on the word of God.

EDUCATION.

THE next connected link of the parochial system is the school. I use not this in the more simple and ordinary meaning, but as representing education. It may be laid down, in the outset, as an error that has produced the most unhappy consequences—the supposition that reading and writing are education; they are but the means by which education is attained. This has been not unhappily illustrated by comparing them with the tools put into the hands of an apprentice; they will neither make him a carpenter nor a shoemaker, but by proper and diligent use of them, under the instruction of a master, he will become either one or the other. So is it with reading and writing; they are the mechanical instruments by which education under good direction is to be worked out; but he who has thus,

as it were, merely bought his tools and then throws them aside, goes into the world as ignorant, or more dangerously ignorant, both as respects himself and society, than he who has not placed a foot on the educational ladder. Education is the moral and intellectual cultivation of the soul, not merely for its embellishment or for utility, as appears the fashionable doctrine of the day, but as the preparation for a higher and more intellectual state of existence: it is the commencement on earth of a system which is to carry us forward into heaven. Is it not then a grave matter how such a system is conducted, how the end we have in view is promoted? That some system is necessary is on all hands practically admitted, and yet that any has been hitherto arranged satisfactory in all its particulars, and in all cases applicable, the very diversity of practice existing proves to be a position more than doubtful. The nature of education will seem to require that it should be not entirely

but as little mechanical as is consistent with order, and that whatever may be the system adopted, it should at all events be made to blend and co-operate with the other parts of our parochial system ; it should, by dovetailing in with it, if I may use a familiar expression, form an integral part of it. Yet when all that order and discipline can effect has succeeded, there is still a vast chasm which the christian minister can alone fill up. He will look upon his labours in the school as indeed sowing the good seed unto a future harvest, and will trust to no mere forms or regulations, however well drawn up and carried into execution by the schoolmaster, but, himself carrying out the principle these labours tend to, he will give life and energy to the mere mechanical industry of the school, and supply food and occupation for the new powers with which by education the scholar is invested. This would appear the peculiar province of the pastor, one which no one can so well and efficiently

execute as himself. Let the system adopted be what it will, it is in his power to direct it to a good end ; if judiciously and zealously taken advantage of, he has opportunities of which he cannot be deprived. Unless the seed sown is positively rank and bad, which in the present day is next to impossible, he may direct its growth, and, by pruning or different cultivation, make it flower and bear good fruit. Education is a general term, which in the beginning of these observations I have endeavoured to define ; in its object it is always the same, but in its nature it must vary according to the wants and circumstances of the times or the individuals. It must be evident that, to be useful or answerable to its great object, it must keep pace with the times. The education of 1600 would have been comparative ignorance in the following century ; the education of the last, or passing generation, would be totally inefficient in the present day. Neither, on the one hand, as a *laudator temporis acti*, or,

on the other, an enraptured admirer of modern intellectual advancement, it is still evident that to prepare a Christian for the world, putting higher considerations for a moment out of view, much more is now necessary ; a higher and better education is essential, than would have been amply sufficient to enable him to meet the world, and perform his duty in it in the last generation. It is often painful to the zealous Christian to hear on how narrow a basis the duty of education is placed. The plausible cry is, We would have every one taught to read his Bible. This was, in his day, the pious prayer of one of our best monarchs, and in his day, so rapid has been our progress, it was all his most sanguine wishes could expect ; but he must now not only read, but understand, and be able to illustrate his Bible, if he would assume his proper place in the world, and be ready to fulfil his duty ; nor must his knowledge be confined to the Bible ; he cannot without danger be kept back from that knowledge.

which is so widely and generally diffused. We have no right to deny him the advantages of the age in which he lives, and it will be our wisdom to make these support and strengthen religion.* If the church is found wanting in its endeavours to enlighten its people, we must not wonder if they throw themselves into the ranks of dissent, or ranks still more to be feared—those of cold and heartless infidelity. Under, therefore, whatever circumstances we may find ourselves, let it be our endeavour to direct what some of us may consider the threatening storm, and we may not only prevent its mischief, but turn it to a good account. Unless schools of open infidelity are established,—and this is, let us hope, impossible,—such rudiments of education must, even under the worst circumstances, be laid, as may, under our superintendence, be made the foundation of a christian course. Although very far from considering the system established in Ireland such a

* See Bishop of Winchester's Charge, pp. 27, 28.

system as would be in any way desirable to see established here, or could meet our most qualified approbation ; even in the Irish system much blame will attach to the clergy, if they do not labour to give it a good direction ; when, in reading and writing, the tools are in their hands, if they do not raise a superstruction, now or hereafter, as the building grows to maturity, in accordance with truth. Whatever is done, the ultimate result will be the same ; ignorance is the fortress of error ; truth cannot be placed in too broad a light ; our religion fears no scrutiny, but invites it ; it does not avoid the searching inquiries of human reason, but appeals to them. Give us, then, but the opportunity of inquiry, and one half of our work is done. The Protestant system is progressive ; we covet light : as has been beautifully expressed by our great poet, " it is like the eagle soaring to the sun, and drinking light from its source." Fear, then, under any circumstances, is unworthy of the Chris-

tian ; the harvest is his own, why shrink from gathering it? however blighted, it will yield much good corn. Where others have sown, we may reap : the responsibility is with us, if we do not send good and efficient labourers into the harvest ; it is with them, if they do not turn all their talents to the one thing needful, if they do not study and adapt their instructions to the times, and labour to place those under their charge in the most favourable situation their circumstances will permit. "That the soul be without knowledge is not good ;" why then should we check, or, what is tantamount to checking, why should we withhold the advantages the peculiar studies of the day afford us—why, as a matter of mere policy, if we can descend to such an argument,—why should we throw away the assistance and the power that knowledge places in our hands? Is the Christian the worse for worldly knowledge—for science, for the enlargement and improvement of his faculties, for the superiority of the mental

over the sensual enjoyments? All these tend but to the same end as religion, and if by their assistance we are enabled to get part of our way, why may we not, by engrafting on them religion, render easier the rest? Be it remembered also, that we are not to stand by and allow these to run to riot; we must watch and instil with them, and by them, the spirit of truth: in whatever spirit they may be taught by others, it is for us to give them their direction, and make them support and illustrate truth. All knowledge has the same divine Author, whether it be written in his revelation or in his works; all science is but reading those works; discovery is but a knowledge of his laws. Who then so proper to act as their interpreter as he whose express business it is to explain that part which God has himself revealed? It is true, that amid his other occupations he may plead want of time for this, but the times require great exertions; and if the church wishes to lead and direct the public mind, its ministers must keep in advance

of it; the people on all occasions should be able to refer to their minister, or they will learn to trust to their own judgment and to undervalue his. The minister's province, then, independent of any system, is to direct or give a direction to all. At the same time, whenever it is in his power, the system itself is an important matter of choice, and before selecting he will do well to consider the circumstances and situation of the place for which he selects it. A system there must be for the establishment of order and regularity, themselves two efficient rudiments of education; but under the provisions insisted on above, so that it accomplishes this purpose, it is not of the importance generally supposed. There is no system so perfect that it can be safely left to its own mechanical construction. In places where numbers are to be educated with small resources, the system of Bell or Lancaster may be usefully applied; but where the numbers are not greater than a schoolmaster or mistress may attend to,

a simpler and less mechanical system is far preferable; but no system can preclude the watchfulness and assistance of the visiter, while none so essentially require it as the larger and more mechanical. They contemplate perfection in the different provinces, in the schoolmasters, in the visitors, and in the teachers; but as we know none of these are perfect, we may as well expect the steam-engine to work of itself, though necessarily made of imperfect materials, as this mechanical system of education to work out any good effect without watching and surveillance. There being no royal road to knowledge, for to discipline the mind it must be instilled by "precept on precept and line upon line, here a little and there a little," it would be far preferable, where from numbers it is attainable, to work out education by the older and simpler method, not refusing to avail ourselves of such improvements as are within our reach, but rendering the education, as far as may be, personal, if I may use that term. Such a system will

be easily arranged and perfected, by comparison with neighbouring schools, from which hints and regulations may be taken ; and it has this advantage over a more studied system, that it is not fettered by general rules, which, although found inapplicable, as parts of a system cannot be given up, but may adapt itself to the wants or circumstances of the parish. Under the arrangements for the Green or School Class, in the Provident Society, will be found the only hints I shall venture to give, and these are calculated rather to secure attendance and good behaviour at school, than to point out any system there to be adopted.

Proceeding to what may be looked on as a higher branch of education, there is one that deserves our most serious attention, and to which many of the preceding remarks have reference—the education of young persons who have left school. This will be found one of the most difficult parts of the parochial minister's duty :*

* Bp. of Winchester's Charge, p. 42.

the lads of the village are indeed the thorn in his side, and a thorn it is his most difficult task to extract. Everything is arrayed against him—pride, pleasure, independence, all the bad feelings and some of the good are to be coped with, before this most desirable point can be attained. Were it merely their own good that was at stake, it would be amply sufficient to excite all his best exertions; but the order of the whole community, and all his hopes of the rising generation, are tied up with them, which renders it in every way a more anxious question how the desired good can be brought about. It is one that deserves far more consideration than it has yet received; what is education if it extend merely to the ages of ten or twelve? We merely launch a vessel into the world, without any provision for the steadiness of its course. We can boast nothing of education until we have mastered this difficulty, until we have brought those whose opening faculties require our most earnest and anxious

attention within the pale of education. If there is any one age at which a friendly director is more wanted than another, at which a salutary check is with the greatest difficulty maintained, it is that at which the scholar is usually released from school. At the very moment he requires the greatest watching and the greatest restraint, he is released from all, and sent into the world with the mere flimsy preparation of reading and writing. If we consider how contrary is the course taken with those in the higher orders of society, we shall not be surprised at the comparatively speaking doubtful results of education. If it is carried no farther than the ages of ten, twelve, or perhaps fourteen, we shall not be surprised that in the succeeding years between these and twenty, when the passions are acting in their greatest force, the good seed is easily eradicated or choked, if even a more dangerous direction has not been given to the neglected power with which you have invested them, and that which was intended as a blessing be perverted to a curse. To secure

it as a blessing, it is necessary to cope with the difficulties by which the task is surrounded. It would indeed be heartless to give up the golden fruit at the moment it is ripening. It will only increase our responsibilities, not our satisfactions, if we surrender to the rude blasts of the world, without a struggle, the choice flowers and goodly blossoms we have nurtured with such care and satisfaction from the bud. Our greatest adversary is pride. It is the age of a premature independence with which we have to deal, without any compulsory power, which can no longer be attempted with effect; and to attempt anything in which defeat in case of a struggle is certain, is injudicious; it is only left us so to adapt and accommodate our measures to the times, as to endeavour to secure the good, or the greatest good that their imperfection will admit. The means that have been suggested for effecting this are adult schools, but these presuppose the difficulties overcome, whereas they exist in greatest force preparatory to the first step being taken.

Amidst a population who at that age are anxiously engaged in earning their daily bread, it is very difficult to fix on any time that will not interfere with their necessary avocations; and on Sunday, the only day open, it is still more difficult for the clergyman to assign a time or times at which he can attend to them. It is not merely the young men, but the young women also must have their separate and allotted time. Supposing this difficulty overcome, we have then to contend with the pride and restlessness of restraint, to which their situation is peculiarly incident; it must encroach on their time, and, as they will argue, on the only time that is at their disposal, while few are there whose minds are so well disciplined, or sensible of their own ignorance and want of instruction, as not to consider this continuation of the school as a degradation in the eyes of their fellows. Arrayed with these discouragements are pleasure and independence, both of which are most formidable adversaries in the

scale. But supposing again all these overcome, and the scholars assembled together, our difficulties are by no means got over. What course and manner of instruction are we to adopt? This is by no means a question so easily answered as we may suppose, while it is one on which information by all those who have tried such a plan, has been long anxiously sought. It is evident the scholar can be no longer treated as a child ; he comes with difficulty, and his instruction, to be successful, must be carried on with the nicest delicacy. In nine cases out of ten it will be found useless to set tasks which he has neither time nor inclination to learn, nor can he be instructed in the same simple manner as others. Our intercourse with them must assume a milder form, and instruction must be administered, not so much as a lesson, as in the form and by the means of conversation. Under these circumstances it is barely possible to divide them into classes, and yet, from the inequality of their power

and their knowledge, it is essential to their adequate instruction. Such are some of the difficulties, apparently small, combined with others, on both sides of a personal nature, that arrest the pastor in this part of his ministerial labours. As a partial, but very partial measure as regards his whole flock, it may be carried into execution with some good effect; but so large is the portion it cannot include, that it must be looked upon rather as a scene of private exertion, than as any part of a system of general instruction. Discouraging as these views are, on a subject where every encouragement is required, the difficulties will not be found overstated. Evening or night schools may be found to do away with some of the difficulties arising from their employments, but will be far from meeting all, or from accomplishing the end in view. The inadequacy of such means compels the anxious minister to look around him for other auxiliaries, and to avail himself

of such as even partially effect the good he contemplates.

On looking back into the spirit displayed in the ordinances of our church, the question will suggest itself, whether its exhortations to catechise may not be the key to those means by which our object is to be accomplished, and whether, if complied with in their spirit, they may not be adapted to answer all the wants of the day.* The spirit of the Liturgy, as of the Bible itself, appears to live through time; it is always vigorous and appropriate, and it is the crying error of our Church, that it has been so much departed from and neglected. In taking a nearer view and more comprehensive consideration of it, it would appear that by reverting to its injunctions to catechise, we may carry out the principle in such a manner and spirit as may adapt it to the purposes contemplated. The Liturgy points out

* See Archdeacon Bather's excellent Charge and recommendations on this subject.

to us not only the rudiments of religious instruction, but all things that a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health, as those to which our attention is to be directed. In her catechism she has given us a formulary, containing a manual or abstract of christian doctrine, which is to lay the foundation in the mind of the young Christian of a system of doctrine his future researches are to perfect. With these practical directions before us, it is no difficult task to undertake such a system of catechising as may fill up the outline of this our educational system, better probably than what will prove only an abortive attempt in adult schools, and in strict conformity with the spirit of our Liturgy, and the practice of the purer ages of our church. In carrying such a plan into execution, it will neither be confined to a *viva voce* examination, nor to mere weekly repetition of the church catechism. Such is the province of the school, where this admirable formulary may not only be learnt, but understood

and proved in all its positions from Scripture. The catechising adapted to the instruction of adults should be this system carried into detail and extended to higher subjects, that all those things may be embraced which a Christian ought to know to his soul's health. This may be easily worked out and adapted by every pastor to the circumstances of his flock, in a simple plan proposed below, and with these peculiar advantages, that it will embrace, without any necessary restraint, the young of both sexes, while it interests in their friends and connexions a large portion of the community, and is at the same time an useful and practical sermon to all others who may not be thus directly or personally interested. One method of carrying it into effect may be simply this —by giving out questions on such passage of Scripture or subject as it is intended to take up. These are to be answered before a given day, and the passage or subject being then taken up as the evening's discourse, such answers as are ap-

plicable may be woven into it, with all such further instruction or application as the case may require. The answers may be then returned either to the person, altered and commented on, or left to another set of questions for the succeeding lecture, to be taken away. An intercourse will be thus kept up which may be turned to the most beneficial purposes, and the pride and jealousy of restraint, so injurious to the prosperity of any other plan, be conciliated and obviated without what may be on their part considered a derogatory condescension. There are many advantages such a system possesses. The scholar is not called upon to give up his leisure hours, or to sacrifice, sometimes doubtless at personal inconvenience, his only hours of recreation, while he carries with him his means of self-instruction, and adapts them to the times and seasons that are most convenient. His evenings may, without much call on his time, be profitably occupied in working out his answers, while the family around him will

be in most cases induced to participate in his labours. Thus may the ramifications of such a system carry instruction by means of those avowedly answering with the retirements and family circles of others whom it could not otherwise reach. The family meeting may be thus seasoned and leavened, and the good seed sown, to produce a future and abundant harvest. One advantage is certain, that if we succeed in interesting one, we are pretty well certain of interesting a family, and in many cases those may be brought to church to hear the answer to a particular question, whom a mere general discussion, however good, would have left at home. To those who have no more immediate interest, the lecture may still offer the advantage of a good practical sermon, enriched with reflections on the passage or subject considered, and applications, whether doctrinal or practical, to those to whom it is addressed ; while it cannot fail, however little they may enter into it, to have some interest from the cir-

cumstances of the discussion and explanation of particular subjects being proposed beforehand. Such a system, regularly worked out, would appear to go far to answer the purposes contemplated by the Church in its exhortations to catechise in the very spirit and manner prescribed, by question and answer, while, without militating against the habits and customs of the day, it would appear to adapt and make them coincide with the directions and spirit of the Church.

CONCLUSION.

IN the preceding pages it has been urged that every auxiliary should be called to the assistance of the pastor in the execution of the trust reposed in him. God has in his providence set him an example which, following in the steps of his Divine Master, he should endeavour to imitate. "All things should be made to work together for good to them that love God." Let no means be despised that tend to the all-important ends he proposes to himself—the temporal and spiritual good of his people. Adopting the expressive phrase of the passage quoted above, "All things should be made to work together;" the whole system should be so harmoniously fitted and blended as to tend to one end, support-

ing and furthering the same views, correcting the same evils, and pointing to the same object. If the superstructure we raise be the spiritual good of our people, the keystone of the arch must be pastoral visitation—the foundations of the pillars a well-organised system of provident exertion—and the door, education. But to depart from allegory, no system will be consistent that does not embrace all these points, and, even beyond these, that does not adapt any advantage and privilege that may locally exist to the same purpose. It may be thought, and indeed evidently in practice is so, that these matters are of trifling importance, and out of the province of the pastor. Nothing that tends to the good, whether temporal or spiritual, of his people can be so, and to establish and maintain his just and beneficial influence, he must sympathise and identify himself with his people : it is in the neglect of this, so much influence has been lost. Let them feel that they have in him not a superior, but a friend—one

who will enter into their feelings, their hopes, and their wishes, and his moral influence in directing them for good will be immense. There is no need, as some may imply, of degradation, or lowering the standard of ministerial bearing; the higher this stands, only that it is tempered with kindness and suavity of manners, the more efficient will be the ministry : it is not to one, in all senses our equal, that we come for advice ; it is to one we admit to be superior ; and the more his situation tends to make him impartial and disinterested, the more fully we receive and appropriate his advice.

I have thus shortly entered into this, because the details into which the preceding propositions carry us, may appear to some unfitted or inappropriate, as parts of clerical duty. The minuteness into which the pastoral duties carry us, give to such propositions, in the eyes of those unacquainted with the homely nature of the parson's office, an air of laboured detail, applicable rather to the

economy of a family than of a parish; and yet, if rightly understood, it is in this very seeming difficulty that the propriety of such topics consists. It is because a parish is but a great family that the same directions are applicable to the management of both. If the family has grown up beyond our control, we must call in such subsidiaries as may offer themselves. In the family we call in the schoolmaster, and hold the strings of the purse; we must carry out the same system in the parish; and, as in the family, we can, after a certain age, only influence and guide by showing the identity of our interests and feelings, so must we prove the same feelings to be the mainspring of our ministerial exertions in the parish. Let us not then look on detail with indifference; each means of influence, however weak, is an important auxiliary, and must neither be neglected nor despised.

Having shortly treated, in the preceding remarks, of those things which form the essence of a parochial system, I

shall conclude them with pointing out two or three other auxiliaries which may be usefully called to our aid. The first of these is the allotment system. There is no plan so fearfully capable of abuse, or more beneficial when properly conducted. It is capable of gross abuse, and of being made the means of oppression, when left in the hands of a taskmaster or middleman: when rightly and liberally conducted, there is no better way of helping the labourer to help himself; but it should always be kept in view, that the whole benefit of this system rests in its being based on fair and liberal terms. I would not be understood by this to imply that the land so allotted should be given to the labourer; this must necessarily limit its extension; for many whose good-will would lead them to carry it into execution will be hindered by their necessities. The basis of such an allotment is such a rent as the farmer would pay for this or corresponding land; it is then in the power of any one who

has land, to assist his brethren without injuring his family. The abuse of the system is that extortionate rent that may be wrested from the labourer. We must not imagine that the plan is new, it has been long in practical operation; the only new feature is, the labourer being the immediate tenant of the landlord, and the land thereby being let at a fair and beneficial rent. The plan has been for the last century at least adopted, and doubtless, like other things commencing in good and liberal views, been gradually made the instrument of oppression, until in most instances, and in many even to the present day, land that has been let perhaps at fifty shillings an acre, has been underlet to the labourer at one shilling a pole, to pay eight pounds to the tenant or middleman. Such may be its abuse, but justly administered it is a source of comfort, of industry, of moral improvement; and as such, in the hands, or under the surveillance of the pastor, or even by his proving his interest in it, it may be made a

most powerful instrument to support his other plans for his people's spiritual and temporal good. As a privilege it may be made dependent on the performance of duties of a higher nature, and the school list, the sacrament list, and even the provident society, may be looked through to determine who shall have the offer of the next vacant allotment. In connexion with all these, and as calculated to rouse a community where apathy has been the prevailing evil, a society for parochial improvement, distributing rewards for the best garden, the neatest cottage, the greatest cottage improvement, the largest family constant in their attendance at school, or investing most largely in the provident society, &c. &c., and associating all those securing such prizes as members for the decision of future prizes, will be found to have a most beneficial effect. With the same view as regards education, on which there is already great sluggishness manifest, a ready means presents itself of keeping up

the energy requisite in the system—in school meetings—I mean meetings of different neighbouring schools, at which the children of the same age may be examined together, and a reward, which under such circumstances they will be proud of, given to the best, or so many of the best. The benefit of such a plan is not confined to the meeting, but anticipated and carried back into the school-room. It affects the master as well as the scholar, and in its particular application may have additional force given it, by limiting the meeting to those who by their good conduct are, in the opinion of the schoolmaster and clergyman, calculated to do their school credit; while the number of these will equally show the state and efficiency of the school.

.. In my own parish I found a custom established, but nearly in its spirit extinct, which, as calculated to interest, and to preserve at the same time a most powerful influence, it may be useful to mention. On the death of any young unmarried person,

no tombstone is raised; but a simple chaplet, recording the name and age, is hung up in the church. It is of paper, yet this apparently frail memorial has in many instances hung more than a century—longer, indeed, than the memory it intended to perpetuate has survived. The useful application of such a custom will be readily understood. At the age when the strongest restraints are wanting, it presents itself as one of them. The chaplet records the memory only of the pure and unsullied, and one denial of this customary honour, however painful, not as in other cases difficult to determine, will produce an effect which few exhortations will equal. I have thus hastily sketched the outline filled in with some of the details of such a parochial system as I conceive the circumstances of the church and the times require. I would willingly endow it with more power, but that the times, perhaps rightly, deny—I say rightly, because so long as the church is but represented by its ministers, and

until the laity return to a better feeling of church membership, and practically exert themselves as the church, and identify themselves with its privileges, it is hardly desirable that greater power should be imposed on those who are already barely upheld in the full execution of their duties. Seeing it as it is, it is our duty to endeavour to effect the greatest good by the means at our disposal : it is unquestionably the duty of the laity to strengthen these means, and co-operate with their ministers ; and it is almost incredible how much good may be thus effected. If we consider every worldly advantage as a talent entrusted to our care, we shall duly understand its rightful appropriation. There is nothing we can call our own ; there is nothing we are not deeply responsible for the application of. We cannot avoid this responsibility by squandering it in charity, if in this improper sense I may use this term. It may so do some good, but, to relieve our responsibility, it must do the

greatest good. It must effect the purposes for which it was given ; and if, by lavish or careless squandering, it defeats, or is not made to encourage and support, a well-organised system calculated to promote the moral and spiritual good of our brethren, it is no longer a blessing in the hands of its dispenser. Instead of exertion or prudence, it encourages and fosters indolence ; instead of tending to and enforcing spiritual improvement, it corrupts and pampers, recoiling both on the giver and receiver as a curse, which blights the healthy fruits of honest industry, and belies the promise it flatters with of christian charity well dispersed. What are not its blessings ? Read them in the thriving community, in the moral developement, in the social energy of thousands, in the comfort of the cottage fireside, in the improvement of every moral virtue, in the growth of every christian grace ; and lastly, in the offering such a benefactor alone will reject of the gratitude of a thankful people, while he directs

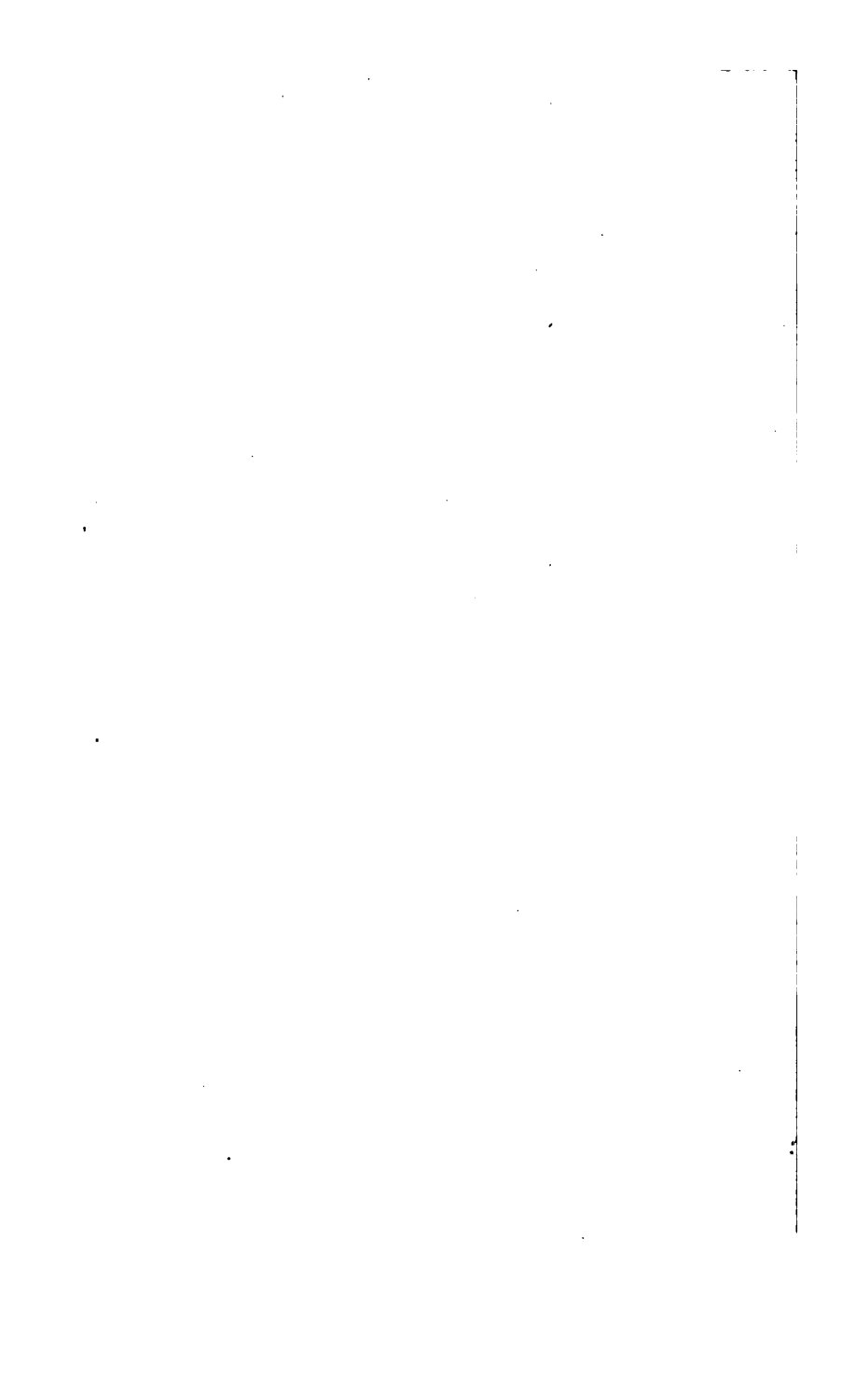
it to Him who has made him his steward,
and has prepared for him his reward in
heaven.

THE END.

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